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TRADITION OF THE CASTLE.




Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

THE
TRADITION OF THE CASTLE;

OR,
SCENES IN THE EMERALD ISLE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.




BY
REGINA MARIA ROCHE,

AUTHOR OF

THE CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY, VICAR OF LANSDOWN, MAID OF THE
HAMLET, &c.

“ Oh Erin, my country ! though sad and forsaken,
In dreams I revisit thy sea-beaten shore;
But, alas ! in a far foreign land I awaken,
And sigh for the friends who can meet me no more.”

VOL. IV.



LONDON :

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1824.

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THE TRADITION OF THE CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

“ The ways of Providence are dark and intricate,
Puzzled in mazes, and perplex'd with errors ;
Our understanding traces them in vain,
Lost and bewilder'd in the fruitless search ;
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
Nor where the regular confusion ends.”

ON reaching the Vale, Donaghue was informed the whole party were out in the grounds ; he hesitated a moment, and then flinging the reins to Cormick, sprung from the curricie, and set out in quest of them. Should fortune prove sufficiently propitious to let him meet Miss Erin by her-

self, he determined, if possible, on leading to some explanation with her ; and, in consequence, looked and listened for her in every direction.

The day was lovely, a summer one, without being overpowering ; and, as he advanced amidst the enchantments of the place, a feeling of serenity, not lately experienced, stole over his mind. The soft verdure of the ground, the fragrance of the flowers, that poured forth profuse over hill and dale, enamelling it, the freshness that every thing breathed, the luxuriance of the woods, thronged with sportive birds, the sparkling of the running rivulets in the sunbeams, formed, altogether, a scene of beauty and delight, that had an indescribable effect upon his feelings. In his enjoyment of it, he almost unconsciously loitered at times, as if, the moment he quitted it, he expected to be plunged again into the agitation from which he seemed for an instant to have escaped ; but the idea that was connected with it, associated with all that soothed and enchanted

in it, would perhaps have imputed an almost equal charm to any other place.

He had proceeded a considerable way without meeting any one, when, as he was slowly approaching a beautifully sequestered cottage, recently erected under the direction of Miss Erin, near the channel of a stream, that, bursting in a picturesque manner through an arch of rock, covered over with ivy, seemed impatient, from the rapidity of its current, to gain the tranquil mazes of a dale at some little distance, one of the Miss Magennises, darting out of it, came flying towards him, and telling him she had not a moment to spare to speak to him, as her mother was waiting for her in another part of the grounds, but that, if he wished to see Miss Erin, he would find her in the cottage by herself, rapidly passed him without another word.

Delighted at the intimation, Donaghue hastened onward, but stopped, irresolute, just within the cottage. Exactly opposite

to him was the entrance to another apartment, and immediately within this he caught a glimpse of Miss Erin, reading, with her back towards him, and, apparently, so attentively, that, uncertain as he was of the reception he might meet with from her, he knew not how to venture at any thing like an intrusion on her.

While earnestly watching for some movement that might give him a hope of being discovered, approaching footsteps made him turn round, and, with a sensation of surprise that may well be imagined, he beheld the very being whom he thought he had been watching within a short distance of the cottage, unaccompanied by any one but lord Altidore, and with whom she seemed in earnest conversation.

Donaghue now earnestly sought to ascertain who was the person really in the cottage, and a slight alteration in her position giving him an opportunity of obtaining a glimpse of her face, he discovered it was, as he strongly suspected, lady Jane. Indignant at the trick that had been play-

ed him, he rushed from the cottage; and, from knowing he could not have done so without being seen by her, turned in the direction to meet Miss Erin. She evidently tried to meet him with her usual manner; but her smile was so forced, her air of pleasure so extremely languid, that Donaghue could not help feeling both awkward and embarrassed; and his embarrassment, it may be supposed, was not lessened, when, just after he had replied in the negative, to her interrogatory of whether he had found any of their party in the cottage, either from a hope that she had no intention of entering it, or else a feeling that would not let him utter the name of lady Jane, her ladyship appeared issuing from it. — “So I suppose you thought I was lost,” she cried, addressing herself to Miss Erin; “but really when I left you, to look for the book I had forgot in the cottage, I had no idea of being detained so long in it, by finding——”

“Oh, don’t apologize!” said Miss Erin, interrupting her; “there’s not the slight-

est occasion; our coming this way was merely because lord Altidore knew nothing before of this approach to the grotto—adieu!” kissing her hand to her—“If you and Mr. O’Brien,” slightly glancing at him, “have any wish to join us, you will find us there with my mother.”

Donaghue stood for a moment looking after her, as resuming, of her own accord, the arm of lord Altidore, she passed on; and might have continued longer doing so, but for lady Jane’s approaching him; he directly turned away, unable to control the feeling of anger, to say nothing of any other which she had excited, and hastily making his way back to the house, sprung into the curricule, with a determination to give up, as much as possible, for the remainder of the time he continued in the neighbourhood, his intercourse at the Vale. As soon as ever the departure of his friends left him at liberty to act as he wished, he firmly decided on leaving Altoir-na-Grenie, convinced that nothing but his quitting the neighbourhood could, af-

ter the many embarrassing circumstances that had occurred, prove that his assertions, with regard to lady Jane, were neither trifling or insincere.

But long before the period for reestablishing himself in the good opinion of those whose esteem was so indispensable to him, with what indifference might Miss Erin view the circumstance! The earnest conversation in which she had been engaged with lord Altidore, the familiarity of her manner towards him, both were regarded with the exaggerating eye of jealousy, as proofs of either a growing preference for him, or a wish to dispose her heart to the admission of sentiments favourable to him, from a conviction, Donaghue made no doubt, that those she had previously given way to for another, were such as the unworthiness of the object for whom they had been entertained demanded her conquering. And this was the work of lady Jane, destroying him thus in her opinion—but complaints, invectives, were useless, and indeed degrading; and

he strove to divert his mind from the sense of unhappiness that oppressed it, by turning his thoughts on the mystery, it appeared to him, so essential to have developed.

In expectation of the visit he was so anxious for, he kept a light burning all night in his chamber, his pistols carefully loaded, and with his sword beside him; and instead of going to bed, merely lay down in his morning wrapper beneath the counterpane, thus prepared to rise, and follow his mysterious visitant, should it positively be required. Two successive nights passed away without seeing him, when, on the third, quite exhausted by this mode of acting, he was on the point of rising, for the purpose of undressing, and actually getting into bed, when a rustling noise in the closet checked the movement, and the next instant, just as he had grasped a pistol, he beheld the semblance of his uncle Dennis cautiously stealing from it. Donaghue stirred not till he saw him at the foot of the bed,

looking in at him through the curtains, when, raising himself in it—"What is the meaning of all this, my friend?" he said; "you must be aware that, from your conduct, I should be fully warranted in treating you in a very different manner to that in which I am now doing; but something like a persuasion that it is not the result of any evil design, checks me from having, as yet, any recourse to violence; but, rely on it, I will not be longer trifled with; if, therefore, you have any thing to communicate, it imports you, for your own sake, to no longer delay the disclosure; as, be assured, this is the last opportunity you will have of revealing it as a friend."

The figure listened with the most profound attention till he had done speaking, when, uplifting its hands and eyes, it seemed calling on Heaven to attest the purity of its intentions; then turning its looks again upon him, it motioned him, with the most earnest gesticulations, to rise and follow to the closet to which it pointed.

Donaghue, as previously decided, could no longer hesitate to comply with this silent but expressive entreaty; whatever was the secret that was lodged in the breast of his visitor, he clearly saw that nothing would force it thence but compliance with what was required, and his curiosity was by this time quite too strongly excited to permit any persistence in refusing this; accordingly, getting out of bed, he prepared himself to attend him, by securing one pistol and sword within the belt of his wrapper, and taking the other in his hand.

The figure remained motionless in the chamber till it saw him ready to follow, when, darting into the closet before him, it vanished from his view; but in an instant the aperture in the floor through which it had disappeared was revealed, by the pushing up of a trapdoor, and Donaghue looking down, beheld a narrow flight of stairs, at the bottom of which stood the figure, holding up a lamp in one hand, and with the other beckoning him to descend. Donaghue obeyed the motion, and

the trapdoor was then pulled down by the same means by which it had been raised, a long iron rod, fastened to a ring in it.

The figure, with the greatest celerity, was now preparing to lead the way down another flight of steps, when it was checked by Donaghue's pausing for an instant—"Before I proceed," he said, "let me remind you of what you saw above; give me the slightest reason to believe that I have been wrong in the confidence I reposed in you, and that instant," holding up the pistol to his view, "is your last."

The other nodded, as much as to say, if he merited punishment, he was satisfied to meet with it; and, putting his finger to his lips, in token of silence, again beckoned to him to follow.

Donaghue no longer hesitated, when, after taking what he was convinced was nearly half the circuit of the castle, his conductor suddenly stopped, and pointing to a door, beneath which a glimmering light was seen, motioned to him to

listen at it. For a moment Donaghue could only hear the clamorous voices of two men, each striving to be heard above the other; at length, he plainly distinguished, in a tone that almost instantly struck him he had heard before—"What, you ungrateful rascal, do you hesitate at such a trifling matter as this, after all I have done for you and yours! Would you have a hole for yourself or your family to shelter yourselves in, but for my generosity?"

"Why, then, upon my soul and conscience, I wish I had never earned such generosity, for I don't think I shall ever have any luck, or grace, or be happy again, after being concerned in the robbery of the discendant of the great king Brien Boru. What signifies what I have got for concealing from the young master the roguery of your father, since you talk so much about it?"

"Roguery! you villain, do you say?"

"Pooh, pooh! what signifies your attempting to humbug me? Do you think,

because I haven't got as much larning as yourself (and, God knows, you have made a bad use of it), I don't know right from wrong as well as another? What else but roguery should I call your ould father's making the poor master that's dead and gone keep out of the way in England, that he might know nothing of what he was doing here, or find out that the long leases he coaxed him to grant, of almost the whole estate, for the sake of raising a little money, which he took care enough, however, he should never finger, were made out to himself, from there being no such man as he had them drawn out for in the world!"

"The short and the long of it is—am I to understand," asked the other, "that you will not assist me any further in this business? You are a sensible man, Dermot; if I hadn't thought so, I wouldn't have placed the confidence in you I have done, because a fool is never to be trusted, neither knowing how to keep his own secrets, or those of any other person; and

if I wished it, I see there would be no use in trying to deceive, or impose in any way upon you. The leases, as you say, that my father got the late Mr. O'Brien to grant, are not worth a rush, since they never could be legally executed, from having been made out for fictitious people; and that is the very reason I want to get this young man out of the way, for, after being led to think I was secure of a fine fortune, and the O'Brien one is certainly a noble inheritance, would it not be hard that I should find myself mistaken? and there is no knowing the moment that might be the case, since there are always busy people in the world, interfering in what does not concern them; and if once young O'Brien began to suspect, to be sure he would never rest till he came at the truth; and then, Dermot, where would be the thirty acres of good land I promised you, whenever I saw him snugly laid beside his father?"

From the silence of a few minutes that ensued, this question seemed to occasion

some consideration in the mind of Dermot.—“ Well, and may I make myself sure, then, of your keeping your word with me?” he then demanded; “ not but I dislike the notion of having any hand in taking away the life of the young master, the last of his race, as one may say.—But perhaps Delaney will do the job, and so save me from having any thing to do with it, barring my knowing about it, to be sure.”

“ Perhaps he may; but if he does not accomplish it to-night, I shall depend no longer on him.”

“ Yet he undertook the job readily enough,” observed the other.

“ Yes; but what signifies that, if he never executes it? Here he has been keeping us in expectation every night for these three weeks and upwards, and still he comes back to us with an idle story of one time being obliged to fly, by hearing a bell ring, and another from finding O’Brien’s man in the room with his master!”

“ Well, and it may be all true enough

what he said; for sure the other night, when I made certain of drawing O'Brien to the chapel, where you were ready yourself to do his business for him, didn't some devilment or other hinder his pursuing me?"

"Ay, devilment indeed you may well say! and only that Barney took an oath, that I know he would not dare to break, not to betray us, I should almost be tempted to think he had given some hint."

"Oh! the sorrow bit of him," interrupted the other; "and I can't help laughing when I think of the way the ould fox took to prevent any alarm, in case he was caught prowling about the castle, dressing himself up in the ould silk nightgown he rummaged out of some of the ould stores of the castle, for he knows every hole and corner in it, to pass for the ghost of squire Dennis, come to discover about his crock of money."

What the surprise of Donaghue was, at learning, as he did from these words, to whom he was so much indebted, may ea-

sier be conceived than described, he had so little knowledge of this man, and from what he had heard, would have deemed it so improbable, that he could have been the contriver of any scheme of the kind. With a start of exclamation, he hastily turned his eyes upon his companion, and at length obtaining what he had hitherto vainly essayed doing, a perfect view of his features, recognised in them the haggard ones indeed of Barney Delaney, the wretched old man for whom his humanity had been interested, on discovering him apparently on the point of being hurried out of life, either through the stupidity or want of feeling of his wife.—“ Good God !” he softly ejaculated, involuntarily extending his hand.

The other received it with a gush of tears, and for a moment seemed nearly overcome by his emotions; then endeavouring to compose himself, he whispered to Donaghue what his further plan was; and without further delay, proceeded to

admit himself to the room where the two villains were.

Donaghue stood in a direction to allow him to see into it, as he opened the door, and with feelings more of indignation than surprise, from having begun to suspect it would prove so, in the person of O'Callaghan's son he discovered his Spanish acquaintance, don Callan, a circumstance that no longer permitted him to be at a loss to account for what had befallen him at Seville, the strange peculiarities of this gentleman's manner, neither the familiarity of the voice to him he had just heard.

"Well, you are come at last!" exclaimed don Callan, or O'Callaghan, on Barney's entrance; "if you had delayed much longer, I should have left this in quest of you. But I hope you are not come back, as usual, with a cock and a bull story of being frightened here, and scared there, but to tell us at last the job is done?"

"At last!" repeated Barney, dropping into one of the old seats that remained still in the place, as if utterly exhausted

by emotion, "at last, what I undertook is done."

"God be praised!" impiously exclaimed O'Callaghan."

"Amen!" responded Barney.

"Well, you are an honest fellow, after all, Barney; and depend on't you shan't repent this night's business."

"No, I am not afraid of that," replied Barney.

"But may I indeed believe you?"

"I won't say another word," cried Barney, "but that if you ever hear another word out of the mouth of young O'Brien, I give you leave to say I am not the man you took me for."

"And it's done!" cried Dermot, in a bewailing tone, and as if awaking from a stupefaction. "Oh, well, well, well! this is the worst news I ever heard—to think that he who was so young and so comely, should be made food for worms before his time! Now that it's done, what wouldn't I give to have it undone! The thirty acres of land I have been promised, and

thirty and thirty more to the back of them, for what good will they do me, when I know there's innocent blood crying out against me? and that at every turn I take, I shall think I see his ghost? and—and there!—there it is already!” he shrieked, in all the indescribable agony of guilty terror, as, at the instant, his eyes encountered the tall and not unghostlike figure of Donaghue, enveloped as he was in his long morning wrapper, rearing itself above the head of Barney—“there it is!” and staggering back a few paces, he dropped in convulsions on the floor.

“Idiot!” exclaimed O’Callaghan; yet as he spoke, his own eye, as if involuntarily, glanced slowly round the chamber, and, with a look of indescribable horror, he recoiled, as if to take shelter in the wall at the apparition it encountered; but almost instantly recovering himself—“We are betrayed!” he almost shrieked, and was turning to seize a pistol that was near him, when Donaghue rushed upon him. On finding himself in his grasp, all

his courage forsook him, and—"Have mercy! have mercy!" he exclaimed, in the most abject tone; "don't murder me, and I'll own——"

"Miserable, degraded wretch!" cried Donaghue, "instantaneous death would be too great a mercy, from the horrors it would save you; but it rests not with me to inflict the punishment due to your crimes.—Delaney, alarm the castle, that proper assistance may be obtained for securing these villains."

"Stop, stop, Delaney!" cried the trembling wretch, in agony. "Mr. O'Brien, have mercy—have pity! oh, do not—on my bended knees I implore—let me be dragged to an ignominious death! if, on no other account, for the sake of my soul have compassion! let me not be hurried out of life without having time to repent for my sins!"

"And what time were you inclined to allow me for this?" demanded Donaghue; "in planning my destruction, what consideration did you bestow on sending me to

my dread account, with all my imperfections on my head? No, villain! it would be to rob justice of her right—to commit a wrong against society, to let such a wretch escape the punishment he merits in this life; so again I say, Delaney——”

“No! no!” shrieked the wretch, “spare me, and on my soul I swear——”

“Wretch!” indignantly exclaimed Donaghue, “do not mock your Creator, by swearing by that on which you set no value; for had you set any value on your immortal soul, would you have dared the perpetration of such crimes as you have meditated?”

“I have been a great—a terrible sinner!” cried the other, finding that no subterfuge would avail; “but it is in my power to make amends for all I did, or meant to do. All shall be your own again: the leases, the long arrears of rent now due to you, restitution, in short, of every thing that you were defrauded of through my father, shall be made you, if you but relinquish your design of giving me up to punish-

ment. And consider, consider," he added, seeing Donaghue, as he imagined, hesitate, "consider, that if you persevere in what may be your present intention, in exposing the villainy of me and mine to public scorn and contempt, so must you also the folly and imprudence of your own father; for if possessed of common sense or feeling, that regard for his family that ought to have been the case, could he, or would he, have acted in the manner he did?"

Donaghue started at an appeal so incontrovertible; and after a little consideration, not sorry, perhaps, to have a pretext, in filial reverence, for yielding to mercy—"Well," he said, "supposing I could prevail on myself to hearken to your entreaties, how can I be certain that you will fulfil what you have promised?"

"Easily. There's a box now hid in the place where I lodge, containing every paper requisite for you to obtain possession of, together with notes to the amount of what I acknowledge myself indebted to

you. Say I have nothing further to dread from your just indignation, and I am content to remain your prisoner here till Barney, whom in that case I shall immediately instruct where to find it, shall have delivered it into your hands, and the contents of it have undergone an examination."

"Well," said Donaghue, after a pause of some minutes, "on these conditions I consent to let you escape, with a hope that the life that is spared may be so passed in future, as to render you better prepared to resign it into the hands of your Creator than you are now."

O'Callaghan, with all the celerity of an overjoyed wretch, now hastened to instruct Delaney where the box was to be found, giving at the same time to Donaghue the key belonging to it; and Donaghue, having taken the necessary precautions for securing him, and satisfied himself that the other miserable wretch was recovering, quitted the place.

Day was now breaking, and Delaney

was not long in executing his commission. By the time he returned, Melville was prepared to witness Donaghue's examination of the box he delivered to him. Its contents agreed with O'Callaghan's statement; and Donaghue, satisfied of this, forthwith proceeded, accompanied by Melville, who almost looked as if he considered all he had heard as a fable, so extraordinary did it appear, and attended by Cormick and Delaney, to fulfil his promise to him. But his curiosity was too strongly excited by many things that had occurred, not to induce him to put some questions to him, ere he suffered him to depart; amongst others, what the cause of that rancorous enmity to him was, that occasioned him to attempt his life?

"From you, Mr. O'Brien," replied O'Callaghan, coolly, now that personal fears were over, having completely recollected himself, "I should hardly have expected such a question, since both reading and observation, I should have conceived,

must have taught you that we always hate those we are conscious of having injured ; your very name was a reproach to me, from the feelings it never failed of awakening ; and whilst you were in existence, I knew not the moment in which I might be compelled to restore what I was so anxious to retain."

" But how is it," said Donaghue, " that you seemed to have a personal knowledge of me, as, from some expressions I recollect to have dropt from you, appeared to be the case, before our meeting on the Continent, as, till then, I have no consciousness of ever seeing you ?"

" That is very likely, from the circumstances under which you saw me ; but, to make you understand matters, I must trouble you with a brief outline of my story. Ambition and avarice were early implanted in my heart ; my father taught me, that, without a certain rank, neglect and scorn were sure of being our portion, and that, without wealth, there could be no enjoyment in life. What his plans

were for me I knew not, but while I was yet a boy, he was invited to send me over to a relation in the wine business in Spain, with a promise that, if he did, I should succeed to whatever this relative was possessed of. The temptation to accept the invitation was too great to permit him to refuse it. I went to Spain, and, in the course of a few years, found myself, through the death of my kinsman, in what certainly should have been a handsome independence to me; but I had by this time contracted a taste for expence and pleasure, that, instead of allowing me to turn his bequest to any good account, led me to spend it in idle wanderings about the Continent, where I gradually became acquainted and connected with a set of the most worthless and depraved characters.

“ With a set of these sharpers, for they merited no other denomination, I at length repaired to London, to try what the exercise of my wits would do for me there; and there, through the insinuations of my fa-

ther, whose views on your paternal inheritance were by this time disclosed to me, I laid myself out to become acquainted with yours, for the double purpose of trying to discover whether he was yet beginning to have any suspicion of the villainy that was practising against him in Ireland, or could be allured into any further act of imprudence, that might accelerate his ruin, or, in other words, drive him to some deed of desperation.

“ No wonder you regard me with such horror—but I will be as brief as possible. How I succeeded, under the name of don Callan, in introducing myself to your father’s notice, and gradually insinuating myself into his confidence, it would be tedious to relate; suffice it to say, I perfectly succeeded in my designs; but apprehensive, notwithstanding the change from boyhood to manhood, some one of the family might recognise me, though he did not, I carefully abstained from visiting at his house, under one pretext or other, continuing to meet him only at the coffee-houses or ta-

verns he frequented, and thus you had no opportunity of seeing me.

“ At length I accomplished my grand object, of introducing him to my associates——but I see, by your changing countenance, you anticipate what I am about adding.— On the fatal night you followed him to the gambling-house, I was indeed, as usual, of the party ; and there I saw you, under circumstances too agitating to allow you to notice any one particularly, but which impressed your image upon my imagination in such a manner, as would have rendered it almost impossible, I believe, for you, under any disguise, to have escaped my recognition.

“ From what followed there, as this was known to be one of my haunts, and my person was well known about town, I deemed it unsafe to continue in the kingdom. Hardly had I returned to the Continent, ere I received an account of my father’s death, with a letter, written some short time before it, importing, that upon his decease, I would find nearly the whole

of the estate of Altoir-na-Grenie vested in me, but in such a way as would require the greatest caution on my side in making good my claim to it. In a word, he so alarmed me, with fears of losing what his villainy had acquired for me, that the horrible idea of ridding myself of them by your death suggested itself to me. Once conceived, I determined never to rest till I had carried it into effect. I will not fatigue you by recapitulating all the methods I had recourse to for the accomplishment of this diabolical design; suffice it, from that period I almost became your shadow. But well as I thought all my plans laid for your destruction, still I found them defeated, as if by an invisible power; and surely it was by an invisible power—by that Almighty Providence that still interposes its protecting shield between the arrow of the villain and the heart of the virtuous.

“ At last, my patience becoming nearly exhausted, I would probably have risked something desperate, when the battle of

Waterloo took place, and in the hurry and confusion of such a scene, I conceived I should at length find a favourable opportunity for accomplishing my design. How I succeeded in obtaining the disguise of a trooper, for the purpose of lying in wait for this, it matters not to say; again I was disappointed, and following you accordingly to Paris, there laid the scheme of entrapping you to Seville, where I had confederates ready to assist me in any plan of villainy, and wishing, all along, through considerations for my personal safety, rather to effect your destruction through treachery than violence.

“ Finding you had again escaped my snares, I pursued you hither; but here, without assistance, I found it next to impossible to execute my design, and by degrees, therefore, was led to break it to Dermot and Delaney, both agents in all the villainy of my late father; the one through necessity, I believe, and the other from resentment at his dismissal from the castle. By bribes and promises I gradu-

ally won them over to my purpose; at least apparently so, for, whether he was all along deceiving me, or his ultimately doing so was occasioned by some sudden compunction of conscience, Delaney himself can better explain than I can."

The departure of O'Callaghan was no longer delayed. Donaghue was indeed quite as impatient for it as he was himself, so hateful was the sight of a wretch reviving the painful recollections he did, and so disgusted was he by the little feeling of shame which his quick restoration to coolness evinced.

Having allowed him to escape the punishment he merited, of course there could be no thought of inflicting it on the miserable being of whose necessities he had taken so terrible an advantage. Dermot, now restored to himself, with fear and trembling threw himself on his mercy, and which, after a due admonition, was granted, with a promise of future relief, if there was reason to believe there was proper repentance for the past; what he had

overheard from him, at the moment when he was led to believe the diabolical scheme against him had been carried into effect, not having been lost upon Donaghue.

The scene closed with Delaney's confessing he knew not how he might finally have decided on acting, but for the feelings of gratitude and compunction awakened by the accidental visit of Donaghue to his cabin.—“From that day,” he said, “when I had so much reason to think your honour was the means of preventing my miserable life from being hurried out of me, and that I saw what your generous heart was, from the relief you directly afforded me, and your offer to serve me, spite of the stories that were told against me, I felt that I would rather let myself be shot through the head, than any longer think of any mischief against you.”

“With such feelings for me, it seems strange to me, Delaney,” said Donaghue, “that you should not at once have disclosed the plot against me.”

“ Oh, your honour, I couldn't, because I was sworn !”

“ Sworn !”

“ Yes, your honour, not to open my lips about it.”

“ And is it possible, that a man of your good sense could possibly think yourself bound, either by religion or morality, to keep an oath of such a description ! an oath is a solemn appeal to Heaven, to witness the purity and sincerity of our intentions ; and how could you call Heaven to witness the violation of its most sacred commandments ?”

“ I can't pretend to argue with your honour,” answered Barney, “ but I have been always told that an oath is an oath ; that is, that when once you are sworn not to tell a thing, it is black perjury to do so ; and so I couldn't, no how, tell your honour what was plotting against you ; but since I couldn't open my lips about it, I set my brains to work, to think how I'd contrive, for all that, to let you know it, and so at last I hit upon the plan of dress-

ing myself up as the ghost of squire Dennis, hoping you'd be tempted, from the story you heard about that, to follow me to the place where you'd be able to discover all by just listening yourself."

"And you don't call this breaking your oath, Delaney?"

"No, your honour, since I never opened my lips about what I was bound to conceal."

"Well, well, I'll take another opportunity of speaking of the nature of the obligations of oaths; in the mean time, I hope this will be a caution to you how you bind yourself to any thing again, without first duly weighing the nature of it, since, you see, from having done so, with all your wish to save me, you might have failed of doing so."

"Then I am sure I should never have known peace again in this world," said Barney; "and indeed I must do Nelly the justice to say, bad as she is, it was not her fault that I didn't tell your honour at once, for she knew every thing that was

going on, and what friends we'd be making of her ladyship, if we proved ourselves friends to you."

"Her ladyship! who do you mean by that?" demanded Donaghue.

"Why, lady Jane Morley, your honour; doesn't your honour know that Nelly nursed her? Troth, and she did, though my lady, somehow, herself, in going to England, seemed to forget it a little; but since she's come back, Nelly has been so much backwards and forwards lately with her, she's beginning to do a little for us again."

"Did Nelly," asked Donaghue, struck with a sudden idea, "ever mention anything about me to her, do you know?"

"Why, since I am not sworn to secrecy now," replied Delaney, a little archly, "to tell you the truth, I believe she did. Hearing—no offence, I hope, to your honour—that there was a liking between her ladyship and your honour, she thought what a pleasure it would be to my lady to hear that you were about getting back your

own fine fortune, and so she told her you were, but not exactly how, only through great discoveries that were about being made."

Here was a light thrown on a subject that had hitherto puzzled Donaghue, namely, lady Jane's apparently persevering attachment to him, as he knew she was by no means of a romantic disposition; and in ceasing to give her credit for the only thing that could have excused the indecorum of her conduct, he became doubly disgusted by this conduct. But the tumult of his mind was too great at present to permit more than a transient thought to be bestowed on this; so sudden, so unexpected had been his restoration to the fortune of his ancestors, to say nothing of the extraordinary means by which this restoration had been effected, that there were moments when the ardent congratulations that were pouring in on every side, the loud rejoicings that met his ear wherever he turned, were requisite to persuade him of the reality of what had

happened—what a proof, the sudden reverse he was destined to experience, that despair should never find a place in the human heart, since we know not the moment when the scene may shift, and a bright and glorious one succeed to that on which we gazed with such gloomy apprehension!

CHAPTER II.

“These are the charming agonies of love,
Whose misery delights.”

“PLEASURE,” says the poet, “never comes sincere to man, but is lent by Heaven upon hard usury.” Hardly had Donaghue recovered from the overwhelming effect of recent events upon his feelings, ere, with all the gratitude of his heart to Heaven for his unexpected restoration to the means of dispensing happiness and comfort around him, a pang assailed it at

the thought, that as far as immediately concerned his own happiness, the reverse in his condition might have been effected too late; the report of an attachment between Miss Erin and lord Altidore had been revived; and in spite of what he had been induced to think were her sentiments for him, he knew not how altogether to discredit it. But he would not long remain in suspense on such a subject; yet how should he summon courage to inquire as to what would be like ascertaining his fate? His agitation was so great at the bare surmise of what he would suffer, should it prove as he feared, that it failed not of exciting the observation of Melville, who, inquiring into the cause, Donaghue at length opened his disturbed mind to him, disclosing all that he had ever felt for Eveleen, or thought about her, with the motives for every successive change of conduct towards her.

Melville evidently listened to him with much emotion.—“ I wish,” said he, when he had concluded, “ you had a little sooner

been equally explicit; since, by satisfying you that sir William Erin was a very different character to what lady Jane had artfully represented him to be, I should probably have prevented all those attempts at dissembling, that must have been so painful to you; but I cannot blame you for what was occasioned by regard for Eveleen; respect for her would not permit you to mention her father in any lessening light to another person; but surely your own observation, the generous and munificent acts you were continually hearing of him, should have opened your eyes to the falsehood of her ladyship."

"No," replied Donaghue; "because I attributed these to the pride of patronage. In short, prejudice has the effect of throwing a complete mist over us."

"Well, don't unnecessarily keep yourself on the rack," said Melville; "the sooner you ascertain your fate, the better."

"Ay, if I thought I should have courage to support it, if it proved unfortunate."

“ Pooh ! this is nonsense ; take my advice, and set off for the Vale directly ;” and as he spoke he made a movement towards the bell, as if to order the horses.

“ No, I cannot indeed ; I have not courage to attempt ascertaining it in any other way than by writing ; for——You may laugh if you please ; but positively I think if I saw the lips of Eveleen forming a negative to my hopes, I should——”

“ Die at her feet !” cried Melville. “ Tragic indeed ! But what says the bard of nature, through the lips of his lovely Rosalind——‘ Men have died, and worms have eaten them, but not for love !’ No, no, my dear lad ; all-enchanting as Eveleen is, and deplorable as it will be to be disappointed of her, yet if it is a disappointment you are doomed to, I trust and hope you will bear it like—a handsome young fellow, with a noble fortune at his back, to enable him to enjoy life, and who may have his choice, if he pleases, of half the fine women in the kingdom.”

“ Really, Melville, at times you trifle most provokingly ; but——”

“ But you are not going to write this, it would, to be sure, be treason, not to say doubtlessly terribly agitating, letter this morning, I presume ; for consider lady Magennis’s ball this evening, given, as she assures every one, expressly on your account, will require all those spirits that may be exhausted by writing it ; let me therefore——”

Donaghue would listen to him no longer ; he hastened to the library, where, locking himself in, he sat down to write this, as Melville had truly styled it indeed, agitating letter ; he poured forth his whole heart in it—told Eveleen, that, for the present, his fate rested with her, since, should her answer prove unpropitious to his wishes, it was his determination to go abroad as soon as he had arranged his affairs, and done what was requisite for the comfort of those dependent on him, there to remain till such time as he should feel reconciled to her loss, and enabled to see

her another's with composure; finally, he concluded by entreating her not to let the agonies of suspense be prolonged; but at lady Magennis's, where they were to meet that night, to let him, if it was only by a look, understand what he was to expect.

Hardly was it dispatched, however, ere he repented not having taken Melville's advice, in postponing it a little longer, the state of agitation into which he was thrown by sending it, rendering the idea of the evening's entertainment absolutely disagreeable to him. It was gone, however, past recall, and he strove to collect himself for what might be the result; such however was his dread of this, that he delayed till the very last moment setting out for lady Magennis's, till, in short, the patience of his companions was quite exhausted, Melville's, from knowing Lavinia was to be of the party, and Rosebud's from his eagerness for any thing that promised amusement.

Donaghue eagerly glanced round the

room as he entered, but none of the Erin party were yet come, and he really felt the circumstance as a kind of respite; but at length lady Erin was announced; she was accompanied by lady Jane, Miss Bond, and Millicent, but no Miss Erin. Donaghue, for a moment, felt almost as if every thing swam round him. She was not coming then; his unfortunate letter had prevented her, either from an unwillingness to occasion him any pain in such a place, or else a wish to consider how she might best soften that which she must give him. Well, he had entreated that the agonies of suspense might not be prolonged, and she certainly had attended to the entreaty, for was not her staying away from the ball—her thus avoiding an immediate meeting, a convincing proof that he had nothing to hope? Aware, however, that this was no place for giving way to his present feelings, he tried to rouse himself, to subdue that deadly sickness of the heart which hope disappointed occasions; and having watched lady Erin to a

seat, he at length forced himself to approach her, but with a feeling of embarrassment, from which, however, he was quickly relieved, by being convinced, from her manner, that as yet she knew nothing of his letter. The usual compliments having passed—"Are we not to expect to have the pleasure of seeing—sir William," cried Donaghue, suddenly checking himself, "here to-night?"

"Oh, yes," replied her ladyship; "but not till it is very late, some gentlemen having dropped in, who will keep him till it is."

"And," Donaghue's voice faltered a little, and he passed his hand across his brow, as if his hair had incommoded him—"and Miss Erin," he resumed, "does she wait for him, or——"

"Oh, no," interrupted lady Erin; "she is merely waiting for Miss Audley. I expect her every moment."

What a revulsion did the feelings of Donaghue undergo at this intimation! a sudden glow pervaded his bosom—his

cheek flushed, and he felt, in short, as a drowning wretch would, who, when all is black despair about him, suddenly beholds a glimpse of hope; yet let him not be too sanguine—she might not perhaps have been able to have avoided coming, and——

He was interrupted in the reflection by lady Erin's touching his arm, and exclaiming—"There she is! and Miss Audley, I see, is hurrying her to the ball-room, and I want so much to speak to her; do, my dear Donaghue, go and tell her I wish to speak to her, before she commences dancing."

Donaghue could not hesitate to obey her; but with what agitation did he proceed to do so! and how gladly, if he could, would he have declined being her messenger, for the sake of delaying a minute that would decide his fate! No one, to have seen him at this instant approaching Eveleen, would have imagined, from his lingering manner, that he was an impassioned lover approaching his beloved mistress.

She did not immediately perceive him on his joining her, from being engaged at the instant speaking to a party that had come up to her; but when she did, by suddenly turning her head, the deep vermillion that instantly overspread her countenance, certainly did indicate something like emotion. But this might be merely owing to finding him beside her, without being at all aware of the circumstance; and his heart, if possible, beat with still greater violence; for a moment its palpitation rendered him scarcely able to speak—he then proceeded to give her mother's message.

“Wishing to speak to me!” said Eveleen, in a hesitating tone, as if of doubt.

“Yes,” replied Donaghue, “there she is; “you may see she is looking this way for you.”

“Yes, I perceive,” said Miss Erin; and she permitted Donaghue to take her hand to lead her to her. As he did so, he felt it tremble—the emotion its tremor excited was not controllable; he gently drew her

back—"Oh! for a moment," he cried, "let me detain you. Eveleen, can you not conceive—must you not know what I am enduring at this instant? and can you therefore suffer its——"

"My mother will be impatient—see!" cried Eveleen.

"I see nothing—I can see nothing, at this instant," interrupted Donaghue, "but the cruelty you will be guilty of, if you trifle another minute with my feelings——Yet, let me ask, did you not receive my letter?"

"A letter! pshaw!" under an air of playfulness, trying to hide her own evident agitation; "I did receive a——"

"Rhapsody of nonsense! Well, be it so; the more incoherent it was, the more justice it must have done to the feelings under which it was written, for it is not in a moment of excessive agitation we can arrange our ideas to the best advantage; it must, however, be much worse than I can allow it to be," the agitation of the gentleman subsiding in exactly the same degree

that that of the lady seemed to increase, "if it did not make me perfectly comprehended."

"Really," cried Eveleen, making a faint, and perhaps therefore an ineffectual, effort to break away from him, "I cannot allow my mother to be any longer kept waiting for me."

"Well, only say that I may hope."

"Hope!" repeated Eveleen, half averting her looks, with a glance of archness; "don't you know what lady Anne says to the wicked Richard?—'All men, I trust, live in hope.'"

"Well, really," cried Donaghue, laughing, and thus betraying that the enchanting permission he required was no longer requisite, "this is what I call wicked trifling; well, if you won't tell me I may hope, say at least——"

But we shall give no more of their conversation; suffice it, that on joining lady Erin—"Well, really, Donaghue," she said, "you are the worst messenger I ever

met with; what, in the name of wonder, detained you so long?"

"Long, my dear madam!" said Donaghue, in a tone of surprise.

"Long, yes! I have been watching you both these—I don't know how many minutes, without being able to catch your eyes. If I hadn't seen you, Donaghue, in the room, I should really have conceived that you had run away with Eveleen."

"Well, my dear madam," said Donaghue, in a coaxing tone, as he seated himself beside her, while Eveleen took the seat at the other side, to hear what she had to say to her, "could you have wondered at that, when you considered how great the temptation to do so?"

"Oh! this is very fine talking; but in that case, what would a certain lady, I wonder," glancing towards lady Jane, as, yielding to her natural bent, she was flirting away in another part of the room, "have said?"

"What lady?" demanded Donaghue.

"Well, really, Donaghue," said her la-

dyship, a little pettishly, "this is the affectation that so provokes me! what lady should I mean but one—she who, deny it as you may, has been so long the occupant of your heart—and does she not look very handsome to-night?"

"Not handsomer than usual," replied Donaghue, coolly, but at the same time glancing expressively across her ladyship at Eveleen; "nor would it be necessary, or rather possible, for her to do so, so lovely has she ever been in my eyes."

Her ladyship turned hers with quickness upon him, to see whether he was speaking ironically. — "Now are you laughing, or in earnest?" she demanded.

"In earnest; no language can do justice to the admiration with which I regard the lovely being who has long, as your ladyship observes, been the occupant of my heart."

"Well, really this is a confession at last," said her ladyship, but certainly in a tone indicative of surprise at its suddenness, "and all is explained, and forgiven."

“All candidly explained at one side, and generously forgiven, I hope, at the other.”

“Well, I really am quite pleased to hear this; we may then look forward——”

“My dear mamma,” interrupted Eveleen, “this is really so like planning for——”

“My dear Miss Erin,” cried Donaghue, in his turn interrupting her, “you know not the pleasure there is in having a friend plan for one.—I guess, my dear madam, what you would have said; but—a lover, while he is only a lover, must have fears; and except I can make myself assured,” taking her hand as he spoke, “of the kind interposition——”

“Now really this is intolerable,” cried her ladyship, drawing away her hand angrily from him, “relapsing again into this affectation!”

“Good Heavens, affectation!” exclaimed Donaghue, emphatically; “would that what I now feel was indeed affected! But, no—and it will not be long, my dearest madam, ere you will, I am certain, ac-

knowledge, that for me to have evinced greater confidence, greater security of happiness, than I now do, would have been the height of presumption.—But I see,” catching the eyes of Eveleen turned expressively on him at the moment, “I must seek for another opportunity of explaining myself. To-morrow I shall hope to be fortunate enough to obtain it; and *then*, when I shall have opened my heart to lady Erin—disclosed all its fears, its wishes, and anxieties, should she indeed deem me worthy of that interest in my behalf I seriously solicit, I shall consider myself the happiest of men.”

“Really you excite my curiosity, Donaghue,” said lady Erin, with some little degree of emotion—“Eveleen, do you comprehend him?”

“Me, my dear ma’am!” cried Eveleen, colouring, and averting her head.

Whether lady Erin, who certainly did not want penetration, would have begun to suspect something from the ambiguous language of the gentleman, and the em-

barrassment of the lady, if the scene had been much longer prolonged, we cannot pretend to say; but at this instant lady Magennis came forward to inform Donaghue, who was to open the ball with Miss Magennis, that dancing was about commencing.

Donaghue bowed, to signify he was ready to attend on the lady; yet, notwithstanding, lingered for a minute to speak to Eveleen.—“As usual, I suppose,” he said, half reproachfully, from certain recollections at the moment, “I am to ask in vain—am to hear, if I solicit your hand, that you are engaged already for as many sets as you shall probably think it agreeable to dance!”

“Well, it is exactly the kind of answer,” said she, laughing, “that you merit, for having set me down as deliberately affronting; however, to shew you that——”

“You can be more gracious than I merit,” said Donaghue, softly; and seizing her hand, “may I indeed find it so?”

“Pshaw! nonsense! really,” forcibly

withdrawing her hand, "this is quite absurd; you'll never cease till you attract observation, and then——"

"Not expiring yet!" said Melville, in a significant tone, as he passed at the instant with his partner.

"There, I told you how it would be!" she cried, half laughing, half vexed, at what she had overheard—"that you would not rest till you had attracted attention by your manner; and see, your partner is waiting for you."

"Don't make me guilty then of the rudeness of allowing her to continue doing so, but say——"

"I really don't know that I mentioned any set, but rather than be the means of keeping the whole room waiting—perhaps—if I don't change my mind—the second set I may condescend——"

Donaghue kissed her hand with rapture, and flew off to Miss Magennis. His bosom's lord sat lightly on its throne, and all the time a free and unaccustomed spirit lifted him above himself with cheerful

thoughts. He was indeed again himself; gloom, fear, despondence—*all* had fled, like vapours before the rising sun. Eveleen had given him hope, and he would not for a moment suffer himself to apprehend that sir William or lady Erin would crush it. What a blissful termination had his troubles experienced, and how much would the recollection, the review, of them, serve to enhance and heighten coming happiness!

But the morning brought with it soberer feelings. The sudden transition from apprehension to hope had been, at first, too much for his steadiness; but the inebriation of sudden delight had passed away—Eveleen's parents, or at least her father, might see things in a different light from what she did; and he again became anxious, and almost unhappy. But a short time would now indeed finally terminate suspense, for, had he been inclined, he could not have protracted it, after the intimation he had given to lady Erin of his intention of waiting on her this mor-

ning; and to the Vale, divided between hope and fear, he accordingly went. Before his arrival, his letter was submitted by Eveleen to her mother, and by her to sir William, so that all parties were prepared for the purport of his visit.

Avoiding entering into needless particulars, we shall content ourselves with merely observing, that the result of this visit was all he wished. Lady Erin's wish respecting him and her daughter is already known; and now satisfied that he had never feigned what he did not feel, that his heart had never really felt a preferable regard for any woman but Eveleen, she could not feel less anxious for its realization than she had once been; while sir William, equally satisfied with the explanations that were given, that there had been no wilful deception or dissimulation at his side, and that he was quite as free from errors as young men in general are, if not more so, perhaps—and this was the truth indeed, for if he had not been tho-

roughly persuaded of this, he never would have given him his Eveleen—united with her in consenting to let him become the future guardian of their child's happiness.

But, with all the explanations that had been given, still an awkwardness might have been felt in giving this consent, had Donaghue deferred, till now, endeavouring to clear up the mistake about lady Jane, as they might then have still imagined she was under some illusion about him. But this had not been the case; Donaghue was able to refer to the conversation he had had with lady Erin in particular on the subject, and from this they were now aware that they might have seen, some time before, that no engagement existed between them.

Still, on many accounts, lady Erin wished she had not till now remained at the Vale. To quit it, however, was not her ladyship's plan. To have done so, at present, would have seemed as if she felt the defeat she had now experienced, and which her pride would not allow her to endure

the thought of; and, in the next, obliged her to give up some new schemes she thought likely to make her amends for it. The fact was, lady Jane was not by any means mistress of the fortune that was generally imagined; and though her passion for Donaghue was ardent, being, to make use of her own flippant language, one of the handsomest creatures in creation in her eyes, yet it certainly was not quite a disinterested one. The old banker, in leaving her the estate he had done, appeared to have left it to her more for the purpose of tantalizing, than affording her enjoyment, since, from the annuities with which it was loaded, entailed on generation after generation, it certainly could only be considered as a nominal one.

This maliciousness on the part of the deceased, however, she took as much pains as possible to conceal, aware it was a circumstance that, with all her attractions, might do her some little injury in the fashionable world. But how was she to keep up the appearance requisite for its

concealment? Distressed and bewildered, she knew not what to do, when all her plans on Donaghue were revived, by being positively assured, by a friend of his uncle's, that there was not the slightest doubt of his not only finally inheriting every thing the general was possessed of, but of being shortly put in possession of a handsome independence by him, he was so much pleased by his conduct; since Donaghue, she knew, was the last man in the world to be swayed by mercenary considerations, and certainly the being, of all others, she should prefer, if matters proved as they were represented.

In the full hope of this being the case, she laid herself out, as already stated, for an invitation to the Vale, where the intimation she received from her nurse, of the expected restoration of Donaghue's paternal inheritance, did not by any means tend to lessen her anxiety for the accomplishment of the object that had brought her there. She had repeatedly heard her father declare, that he should not by any

means be surprised, if the fraud through which Donaghue was deprived of this should yet be discovered; and induced by this to give credit to the assertion of her nurse, she became still more intent and earnest in succeeding in her views respecting him.

But in vain every allurement was essayed, and every artifice in her power to have recourse to practised, for the purpose of effecting them. Donaghue, absorbed by his passion for Eveleen, remained insensible to every advance, and she, at last, began to see that her hope, with regard to him, was indeed a forlorn one. Still, however, the idea of giving pain to a rival was too exquisite not to induce her to try and insinuate a very different belief into the minds of lady Erin and her daughter; not without a faint hope, that if she could pique Eveleen into giving encouragement to lord Altidore, she might yet succeed herself with Donaghue.

But in case she was doomed to final disappointment about him, she began to turn

in her mind what was to be done, as, by this time, she had involved herself in very considerable embarrassments, through her own natural love of expence, and the establishment she deemed it requisite to keep up, to impose on the world. Lawless was gone, and though she had several flatterers about her, she knew of no serious admirer after him. But, by a little management, was not one to be procured? and, after some deliberation, and casting her eyes about her in every direction, sir Edward Surrey was the person she decided on spreading her snares for, as more likely than any one else she knew to be drawn into them. It is true, he was a fool, but then he was a baronet, and had an excellent fortune; and since she could not get the man of her heart, she cared very little who she married, provided it was a person possessed of the power of supporting her in the extravagance she delighted in, and who she thought she could manage; and it was partly on his account, and partly to prevent its being thought she felt a pang

about Donaghue, that she resolved on maintaining her ground at the Vale.

From the moment Donaghue had regained his inheritance, she anticipated what would follow, and accordingly commenced her operations on the baronet, by gradually beginning to pay that attention to him she had hitherto disdained bestowing, singling him out for her attendant in the walks she suddenly began to have a fancy for taking about the domain, and now and then asking him to take her a drive in his curricula, he really drove so well. Sir Edward was enchanted; he certainly admired Lavinia a thousand times more, and, somehow, thought the conversation of poor little Miss Bond, whom he was in the habit of parading about, respecting the wonders she had seen when she was in Paris, quite as agreeable; but then, not to be delighted by the notice of lady Jane—the rich, the elegant, and every-way-distinguished lady Jane, was quite out of the question; and through his flattered self-love and vanity, her ladyship had every

reason to believe she should here at least succeed.

Continually on the watch, and keenly penetrating the explanation that, in its result, had been so propitious to the wishes of Donaghue, had hardly taken place, ere she discovered this result; and while lady Erin, from a feeling of delicacy, in consequence of all that had passed between them respecting him, was puzzling herself how to break to her what could not possibly for any time be concealed, the acceptance of Donaghue's addresses, she herself led to the subject, by at once bluntly telling her ladyship she was apprized of the fact, as well as perfectly aware of her motive for hesitating to acquaint her with it.—“But while I feel grateful, my dear lady Erin,” she said, “for your kind and delicate consideration about my feelings, I am happy to inform you, that they are now not exactly such as to have been wounded by what you had to communicate. I have, for some time past, been so thoroughly convinced, from the knowledge I

acquired of Donaghue's disposition," (she could not deny herself the gratification of speaking invidiously) "that he is a person not to be induced to forgive, where he once conceives he has had reason to resent, that I have latterly been quite as ready to relinquish him, as he could possibly be to relinquish me; as a proof of which, my sincerity in declaring that I am neither pained nor hurt in any manner by what has occurred, it is my determination to remain here till our sweet Eveleen has become a bride."

Considering all that had passed, lady Erin was not a little surprised at hearing her express herself in this manner, on a subject that she feared would have been the occasion of no little disturbance; the pleasure, however, her perfect philosophy afforded her, was certainly a good deal damped by the determination she had avowed of remaining for the present where she was; on many accounts she felt her longer continuance at the Vale would impose a constraint that would be painful.

Politeness, or hospitality, however, would not allow any indication of her real wishes, and which, indeed, must have been very plainly intimated, to have induced lady Jane to give up what she had decided on.

The approaching marriage at the Vale was soon notified to the neighbourhood, by the preparations that commenced for it. Numerous were the speculations its quick announcement put an end to. In the first of disappointment it occasioned, lady Magennis could not help being vexed at the expence and trouble she had been at about her recent ball, till she recollected it might be the means of silencing some invidious reports that had lately begun to be circulated about the family affairs.

Whatever were the feelings of lord Altidore on the occasion, he seemed to have them in tolerable subjection, continuing to visit as usual at the Vale; yet there were moments in which Donaghue fancied he appeared thoughtful and melancholy, and moments too in which Dona-

ghue also felt, that had he not been an assured lover, he certainly should not altogether have liked the friendship that appeared to subsist between Eveleen and his lordship; for, whether it was that she admired his conduct as a discarded lover, or had previously conceived a high esteem for him, but assuredly so it was, that she treated him with the most distinguishing attention, insomuch that Donaghue once or twice could not help feeling a little peevish, on coming to the Vale, and finding them conversing together by themselves, and once or twice on finding they were out walking by themselves; but the very moment after he could have abhorred himself for the thought, that, however Eveleen might have suffered a mother's wishes to have swayed her with regard to the rejection of a lover, she would have permitted them to influence her alone to the acceptance of a lover, without some preferable regard for him. But for what he so reproached, and almost abhorred himself, he tried to excuse himself, by be-

lieving that a little selfishness, he chose to term it, is inseparable from the feelings of a lover.

But all this time, what was Melville about? Melville was as busy as other people, in pursuit of what he thought would constitute his happiness. To go back a little:—on the night of the ball, at which Miss Lavinia had the surprise of finding him metamorphosed from Denny Scanlen into the elegant heir of sir James Melville, it had been the wish of lady Erin that she should have slept at the Vale; but Lavinia feeling that half the pleasure of the ball would be lost if she had not the power of talking over the particulars of it immediately with Rosetta, made some pretext for preventing this arrangement, but with a promise of dining the next day at the Vale.

Rosetta, quite as anxious to hear something about the ball as Lavinia could possibly be to tell of it, or rather to hear something of lord Altidore, lay impatiently awake, watching for her return.

Their rooms opened into each other; and Lavinia, instead of passing on to hers, stopped in Rosetta's to undress, that she might, while doing so, be gratifying her curiosity at the same time. The first question was involuntarily about lord Altidore, and her spirits suddenly reanimated by Lavinia's assuring her, she saw nothing particular, no, nothing assuredly very particular, in his manner to Miss Erin.

"Well, come," she cried, "now tell me who you danced with."

"Oh, Lord, half the room!" replied Lavinia. "You know I was a new star, and so attracted general observation."

"Well, and who did you see to like?"

"To like! Lord, half a hundred! In the first place," a little archly, "there was lord—lord Altidore."

"Pooh! nonsense!"

"Nonsense! and why so, pray?"

"Because a—lord Altidore is engaged already."

"Is he? I didn't know that. I thought you told me it was all over between you."

“Now, Lavinia, this is just going on in your usual teasing way. You know I mean to Miss Erin.”

“And you tell me so in that tone! Now, Rosetta, if I were to put you to the question, I wonder, would your answer be the same! However, I shall leave it to your Ariel, who, for aught you know, may be hopping about your pillow this instant, to discover the truth, and——”

“Come, tell me what conquests you made?” interrupted Rosetta.

“Oh, innumerable! so much so, that in a day or two you may expect I shall employ you as Portia did her confidant, Nerissa, in conning over my lovers, to see which I shall discard and which retain.”

“But, that’s true,” said Rosetta, “I had almost forgot; what do you think of those two beaux that half the girls in the neighbourhood are raving about?”

“What, Donaghue, or O’Brien, or—I am sure I don’t know which is his name, or whether not both; oh, he is certainly an exquisitely handsome creature! so tall,

and with such dark eyes, and such dazzling teeth, and such a smile to display them—and—I am much mistaken if there are not others who think him quite as enchanting as I do.”

“And his friend—what do you think of him?”

“His friend! really I——Do you know, Rosetta, that once or twice to-night I felt an inclination to love this invisible guardian of mine, on seeing my dress was one of the prettiest in the room, even equal to Miss Erin’s, though hers was so chastely elegant. If the hideous old man, for I am sure he is so, or he would have allowed himself to have been known before this, would but continue to act in this manner, without ever obtruding himself, I should, by degrees, begin to feel a great veneration for him.”

“Fy, Lavinia! I am ashamed to hear you talk in this manner of a person to whom you are under such obligations! How have you been educated?—what pains, in every instance, have not been

taken with you!—and how are you introduced into life; with every advantage that pride and vanity can desire!”

“Oh! if you are beginning to scold,” said Lavinia——

“Well, stop; I see you are not quite undressed yet, and tell me how you like this Melville? I am sure I don’t know how the subject was brought up; but while we were sitting at supper, my father began speaking of him, and saying he heard he was a very fine young man, highly accomplished, and remarkably handsome.”

“Yes, he is well enough,” said Lavinia, with carelessness.

“Well enough! is that all? Then you don’t think him by any means equal to his friend?”

“I didn’t say that,” cried Lavinia, with quickness.

“Didn’t you? Well, I declare I think you did, as plain as you ever said any thing; or at least you allowed it to be inferred.”

“Then I allowed what I didn’t mean; for I think him quite as handsome (handsomer no one could be) as this Donaghue.”

“And which really do you like best?”

“Which do I like best! Why, if I was forced to take either the one or the other, I—I believe I would take this Melville.”

“Forced!” repeated Rosetta; “really you have an extraordinary way of expressing yourself, Lavinia! Forced! Great compulsion indeed I should conceive requisite to induce you to take the captivating owner of the stately old castle here, or the elegant heir of a baronetcy!”

“What! beginning again!” exclaimed Lavinia; “oh, then, good night to you in earnest!” gathering up her scattered ornaments as she spoke, and running into her chamber; but stopping at the door—“though you are so cross, I can’t be so ill-natured as not to wish you *bon repos* and pleasant dreams.”

“And what would be the consequence,”

said Rosetta, with a sigh, as she re-adjusted her pillow, to settle her head on it, "of the wish being fulfilled, but that, when I awoke in the morning, I should, like Caliban, cry to sleep, that I might dream again?"

But whether it was owing to pleasant dreams or not, we cannot pretend to say, but certainly the next morning she appeared in better spirits than she had been in for a considerable time before; and soon after breakfast, which, owing to Lavinia's being up so late the preceding night, was protracted to an unusually late hour this morning, proposed a walk to Lavinia, ere she set about dressing for her engagement at the Vale.

Lavinia made no objection, and off they set, to ramble just as chance directed. They had just got far enough to be out of sight of the house, and were begun talking and laughing over the incidents of the ball-room, when Melville, alias, still to Rosetta, Mr. Denny Scanlen, very unex-

pectedly appeared approaching, and respectfully saluted them.

The compliment was hardly returned by Rosetta, and not at all by Lavinia, and who, as they drew close to each other, gave the arm of Rosetta a pull, to draw her to the other side of the road. Rosetta was a little surprised at this, though not displeased, for she recollected her father's injunction—an injunction that one or two observations had induced her to think it would be quite as well to attend to, and felt she should have, in consequence, experienced some embarrassment, had Lavinia taken it into her head to have given the young man any encouragement to join them. That he would attempt to do so without it, she could not suppose; she was therefore both indignant and surprised, when, instead of passing them as she expected, he wheeled about, and joined them. For a moment she thought of expressing her displeasure at the freedom; but unwilling, from a feeling of delicacy,

to give positive pain, she checked herself, and, without appearing to know that he was at her side, decidedly turned away her head, and began again chatting with Lavinia.

Lavinia, however, had hardly the power of replying to her, so still more incensed was she herself at what had occurred.

In this manner they went on a little further, without deigning to cast a glance at their unfortunate companion, when two young ladies belonging to the neighbourhood, but not exactly to what was denominated the first class, came flying up to them, impatient to hear from Lavinia all the particulars of the entertainment of the preceding evening, from which the circumstance just alluded to had excluded them, distinctions of rank being not more rigidly observed in what are considered, with regard to these, the most rigid of all courts, the German ones, than in Ireland. Hardly allowing herself to ask her how she was—"Well, and was the ball quite as delightful last night as you expected?"

exclaimed the eldest Miss Leland, eagerly addressing herself to Lavinia.

“Yes; I found it pleasant enough.”

“And were there many strangers?” asked the youngest. “We heard a great many were expected.”

“Oh, as to that,” said Lavinia, “I can’t tell you; for I as yet know so few in the neighbourhood, that every face there was almost that of a stranger’s to me.”

“Well; but you know some of the company,” resumed the eldest sister; “what *beaus* had you there?”

“*Beaus!* Oh, *beaus* upon *beaus*. Quite a superabundance of them.”

“And which amongst them did you think the handsomest?” asked the youngest Miss Leland. “Did you see any one there to be compared to Mr. O’Brien, of Altoir-na-Grenie?”

“Why, how do you know any thing of Mr. O’Brien?” demanded her sister.

“How do I! Sure he was pointed out to me yesterday, as he was passing on

horseback; and I think him the handsomest creature I ever laid my eyes upon."

"I have heard that the friend he has on a visit with him is quite as handsome. They were both at the ball last night, to be sure;" and so again addressing herself to Lavinia, "which do you admire most?"

"Me! I don't know that I admire either of them."

"Don't mind her," said Rosetta; "she admires both of them so much, that if Mr. O'Brien had not brought his friend with him, she certainly would have lost her heart to him. If he is vain, he will be getting rid of him, when he finds that he rivals him in this manner."

"Then she prefers Mr. Melville?"

"Oh, decidedly," replied Rosetta, laughing; "if compelled to have one or other, she assured me she should make no hesitation between them."

"I assure you of such a thing!" cried Lavinia, in extreme anger, and drawing away her arm. "I am astonished, Rosetta, to hear you make such an assertion! To be

sure, I—I know it is but in jest; but then,” colouring violently, “there are some jests that are highly unpleasant!”

“Then really,” said Rosetta, in her turn somewhat disconcerted, by this, as she conceived, unwarrantable petulance, “since you provoke me, Lavinia, I will positively deny what I have now said being in jest. You positively did tell me.”

“I told you no such thing!” cried Lavinia, abruptly interrupting her, in consequence of catching the eyes of Melville at the instant turned with archness on her; “so far from telling you I thought this—this Melville any thing that was agreeable, I told you I thought him one of the most disagreeable; but—but,” bursting into a laugh, in spite of all her efforts to prevent herself, at Rosetta’s stare of utter astonishment at this assertion, “it is all accounted for what you’ve said, by your being neither asleep nor awake when I was talking to you, and so not perfectly understanding what you heard.”

“Well,” said Rosetta, “after this, I

shall not be surprised at any thing! Why, Lavinia, you amaze me!"

"Oh well," said Lavinia, but almost convulsed by her efforts to stifle her laughter, "wonder is a very pleasant sensation."

"Poor gentleman!" sighed Melville, as if through deep commiseration; "how unhappy would he be, if he heard this young lady's contradiction of having said any thing in his favour!"

The Miss Lelands, who had not before noticed him, from his having drawn back at their approach, turned their eyes upon him with a stare.

"Something terrible indeed might be apprehended from it, were it to reach his ears," he resumed; "it is fortunate, therefore, for him, that he is about quitting the neighbourhood."

Quitting the neighbourhood! Lavinia started, and there was no further occasion to struggle with her inclination to risibility.

"You know the gentleman then, sir?" said Miss Leland.

“Pooh! nonsense!” exclaimed Rosetta, extremely provoked at his effrontery in intruding himself amongst them. “No, he certainly does not.”

Melville bowed, and Miss Leland opened her eyes still wider, unable to comprehend the meaning of such implied contempt to so very elegant a young man, as, unblinded by the prejudice of Rosetta, the stranger appeared to her to be.—“But I should rather think he does!” she said.—“Pray, don’t you, sir? Don’t you know Mr. Melville?”

“This lady says not, ma’am,” was the reply, “and I never contradict a lady. However, I will so far venture to say, that I have learned, through what I believe is very good authority, that he is about quitting the neighbourhood, through a——” and he glanced with significance and reproach at Lavinia, from whose cheeks the roses had by this time completely disappeared, “through a—a something unpleasant that has occurred.”

“ You—you forget,” said Lavinia, now involuntarily resuming the arm of Rosetta, unable any longer to endure this trifling, from the alarm into which she was thrown, “ that I have to dress.”

“ Oh, no,” replied Rosetta; “ it is not very late; however, we’ll delay no longer,” and she bade good-bye to the Miss Lelands, who were proceeding in a different direction.

She had not got many yards, when perceiving Melville was following, though certainly, on many accounts, with no intention of doing so much further, but merely from a wish to try whether he could not catch a forgiving glance from Lavinia ere he left them, she abruptly paused, and turning to him, at once, through indignation at what she deemed his presuming perseverance, and terror lest of his being encountered with them by her father, explicitly told him not to come any farther out of his way on their account, as his continuing to walk with them was not agreeable.

Melville again affected to sigh and look disconsolate—"I take the hint, madam," he said, touching his hat, and, with a bow he meant to appear submissive; "but what you have now made me sensible was intrusive, I hope you will have the goodness to pardon, in consideration," and he again strove to catch a glance from Lavinia, but in vain, irrepressible emotion at the instant he sought her eyes making her turn aside her head, "that it will not be repeated."

Rosetta coldly bowed, and he turned away. Hardly had he left them, ere the eyes of Lavinia were turned after him. It might be her last glimpse of him. Oh, the bursting agony of that thought! and how could she deny it to herself? and one word might prevent this—one word stay his departure, for his glance in mentioning it had given her to understand that to her it was owing; and why, why should she inflict upon herself the misery of not preventing it? and, unconscious almost of what she was about, she struggled to free

her arm from Rosetta; but Rosetta held it fast, and at once affrighted and indignant at her emotion—"Good God!" she cried, "what are you about? You are not going to run after that young man?"

"Me!" said Lavinia, recalled to recollection by the question, and the paleness of her cheek giving place to a deep suffusion; "no, certainly not. I wonder what could make you think such a thing!"

"Then I really wonder you can, when you attempted to pull away your arm in such a manner from me."

"I might have done that, without meaning to run after him. But—but say what you will, Rosetta, indeed I cannot help observing, that you need not have been quite—quite so harsh—so abrupt with him as you were."

"When people won't take hints, it is requisite to be explicit with them," replied Rosetta; "but indeed, Lavinia, you seem in a most contradictory humour this morning! No one could appear more angry or indignant when he joined us than

you did yourself; and yet now you are reproaching me for having made him leave us—quite forgetting what my father would have said, had he met us with him for our companion.”

Lavinia hesitated, feeling a strong inclination to confess the truth to Rosetta; but a dread of embroiling her with her father, by confiding to her a secret he might hereafter reproach her for keeping, checked the impulse, and finally determined her on saying nothing to her on the subject of Melville. Yet, that now she knew his real rank, it may appear extraordinary her having any fear of doing so; but this was accounted for, by the many hints that had dropt from Mr. Wheatley, as if to caution her from forming any attachment, her guardian having himself decided on disposing of her hand.

That her indignation had been very great at the deception practised on her by Melville, we have seen—that it had a good deal abated, must be equally evident. The fact was, that, as the hurry and flutter of

spirits, occasioned by the discovery of it, subsided, she could hardly, from the character of Melville, allow herself to believe that he would have pressed upon her a request to be permitted to enter into an explanation of it, was he not aware that that explanation could not be to his injury. She had heard romantic stories of men wishing to prove the disinterestedness of the attachment of the person they were attached to, ere they avowed themselves, and this might have been the case with Melville. Be his motive, however, what it might, she certainly should have granted him the hearing he requested—the greatest criminals were allowed one before they were condemned. But the truth could no longer be disguised from herself—she liked first to triumph a little in the pain she saw she inflicted, and so, very properly, he was leaving her to her pride, and she should never see him more.

The moment she entered the house she flew up to her chamber, where, throwing herself on a chair, she sat leaning on a ta-

ble, with her face covered with her hands, in an attitude of utter disconsolation. Rosetta followed—"Why, what is the matter, my dear girl?" she cried, on perceiving her sitting in this manner; "you seemed in a hurry to return home to dress, and yet here you are, as if you quite forgot any thing further about it! Lavinia," she said, on perceiving tears trickling through her fingers, attempting to draw away her hand from her face as she spoke, "you alarm me! I hope—I trust, with your advantages, your prospects in life, you are not giving way to—you are not indulging in any feeling that may prove inimical to them, or disappoint the fond wishes of your anxious friends?"

"No, no! why should you think—why should you suppose," said Lavinia, rising as she spoke, and walking to a window—"I—I only felt myself a little fatigued, that's all; and see," brushing away her tears, "I am now as well as ever I was; 'So, prepare to see by degrees new beauties rise,

And keener glories sparkle from my eyes.'

And yet, after all," carelessly twirling about a coronet of flowers she was going to wear; but suddenly—"What I would give this instant to know who will be at the Vale to-day!"

"Oh! all is safe then," thought Rosetta, internally smiling, "if this is what she is anxious about.—Oh, pooh! what signifies?" she said—"a pleasant party, you may depend on it; but perhaps you are desirous, beforehand, to know whether this Mr. Melville, whom I so strangely mistook what you said about, is to be there?"

Lavinia could not help bursting into a laugh at her so exactly hitting on the truth, and her spirits somewhat revived, set about dressing with alacrity; a gleam of hope had begun to dawn upon her—Melville and Donaghue were engaged, she knew, at the Vale, and she tried to flatter herself, that, however determined he might be on an immediate departure, he would yet postpone it, for the purpose of keeping this engagement.

But, hardly had she entered the drawing-room, when this hope was destroyed by lady Erin's carelessly exclaiming, as she glanced over a note that was handed to her at the instant almost of Lavinia's entrance—"Oh, an apology from O'Brien!" for this was the very day, it may be recollected, in which Donaghue, from what had occurred in his morning visit there, had decided against almost ever again going to the Vale, if possible to avoid it.

So there was an end to all expectation of seeing Melville; his friend had, doubtless, given up his engagement, in consequence of his being about going; and Lavinia felt herself turn pale at the idea she could not avoid giving way to, and, in the pain and confusion it excited, involuntarily turned away her head from every one, and sat, apparently, lost in the contemplation of the prospect she beheld from the window by which she was sitting; though, had she been asked, at the moment, any question about it, she certainly would have felt herself rather at a loss to have

replied whether it consisted of hill and dale, wood and water, or of all combined, she knew no more at the instant than the mole under ground; neither did she hear a word of what was going on in the room, being, in short, in one of those agreeable reveries at the minute, that, for the time being, renders the senses of very little account.

Her deep abstraction, however, was not permitted to be of long continuance; some one touched her gently on the shoulder, and starting from her kind of trance, she beheld sir William at her elbow, and Melville (how instantaneous was the change her feelings experienced!) standing behind him, and earnestly regarding her—so at least she thought for the moment. She turned round; his eyes were directed to something in the park. Well, no matter, he was not gone, he was actually in the room, and she should yet see whether they would not again wander.

“Why so thoughtful, fair lady?” asked

sir William; "I have been watching at least these ten minutes for a smile."

"Ten minutes!" repeated Lavinia, laughing, now restored to all her wonted gaiety; "what an age! why, it wasn't worth watching for one tenth part of the time!"

"If I was a younger—pooh! I mean a single man, I should contradict that assertion; but that chain that is thrown about us in the temple of Hymen is a terrible restraint upon our gallantry! And you are really sincere in what you say—you really think a smile not worth watching a minute for? Ah! how does that roguish smile I see you cannot suppress contradict that assertion!"

"Pooh!" said Lavinia; "this is not fair, to be translating one's looks as smiles; but, supposing, sir, it were as you insinuate, don't you know that what is easily obtained is not always valued as it ought to be?"

"Assuredly! and therefore it is my advice to all young ladies, to be slow and

careful in dispensing their smiles, since regret is an unpleasant sensation, and undeserved condescension cannot fail of exciting it."

"Lecturing, sir William!" said lady Jane, approaching, anxious to try whether she could not learn from Melville the real cause of Donaghue's not coming—"on heads, or hearts, pray?"

"On both, as, like the tides and the moon, I think them connected, the ebbs and flows of one being under the influence, or at least ought to be, of the other."

"Heavens, how ridiculous! I beg your pardon, my dear sir William, but really to think that the movements of the heart could be regulated——"

"In the presence of lady Jane Morley would be utterly impossible!" said the baronet, gallantly bowing; "and now, will her ladyship do me the honour of setting mine palpitating, by accepting my arm to the dining-parlour?" the butler at this instant having announced dinner.

Lady Jane could not refuse accepting

his arm, but she took it with a very bad grace, preventing her as it did from immediately questioning Melville about Donaghue.

As they were moving away, sir William, glancing back at Melville—"Mr. Melville," he said, "there's a lady," directing a look to Lavinia.

Melville gravely bowed, but did not move.

Sir William, a little surprised—"I say, Mr. Melville," he repeated, "Miss Audley will do you the honour——"

Melville, as if it was a thing he could not avoid, now approached Lavinia.—"I am concerned, ma'am," he said, "there's no other gentleman in the way, to prevent my offering what I am sure it will be so disagreeable to you to accept."

Lavinia, with all her pretty little airs of dissembling, not quite so much *au fait* in the art as Melville, felt herself a good deal disconcerted by this speech, and the air and tone of gravity with which it was uttered; the bright vermilion, with

which the joy of seeing him when she thought him gone had painted her cheeks, faded, and timidly, as well as a little tremblingly, passing her hand under his arm—
 “No, I—I don’t know why you should think—that is—I am sure I don’t consider it disagreeable!”

Melville affected to sigh deeply, and turned away his head for an instant, as if she was making an effort to deceive him.—
 —“Ah! no, ma’am,” he said, “delusion is now over—after what passed this morning, so fully confirming the apprehensions of last night!”

“But—I—I was not entirely to blame for what passed this morning,” said Lavinia, becoming still more alarmed; “and I assure you I was—yes, really I was vexed that Miss Wheatley——”

“Miss Wheatley! it is not Miss Wheatley I am thinking—I am complaining of! not of her scornful looks, but of the unkind, the indignant glances that shot from those eyes, when I approached with such humility, such——”

“ Well, what can I say !” almost sighed Lavinia; “ really you must acknowledge that I had reason to be displeased at finding that you had passed yourself on me for another person, or, of course, wonder at my appearing to resent it ?”

“ No—nor of your still appearing to do so, if I had not entreated you to allow me to explain the cause of what appeared so extraordinary, or, perhaps to express myself as I ought, in your opinion reprehensible, since the entreaty, I should have supposed, might have argued that it was in my power to do so satisfactorily.”

“ Well, perhaps it was what I ought to have done,” said Lavinia; “ but, you know, we don’t always,” and she spoke perhaps a little coaxingly, “ do what we ought; and if you have the—the least wish still——”

“ You will listen ?”

“ Yes.”

“ Then you are the very angel I took you for !” cried Melville, in a moment resuming himself, and pressing with glow-

ing transport to his heart the trembling little hand, that all this time he had suffered to rest upon his arm with as much seeming disregard as if a lady's scarf; "in the course of the evening we shall have an opportunity of conversing without observation, and if I do not induce my lovely Lavinia to think she may forgive my offence with propriety, I will submit to be banished her presence without another murmur; though, in being so, all hope of earthly happiness must be relinquished!"

The manner in which the evening was passed was propitious to the lover's wish of opening his heart to the fair object of its earthly adoration. After tea the company dispersed, in detached parties, about the grounds, till they reassembled at the grotto, which was illuminated and prepared for dancing, and where an elegant collation was afterwards served up to them.

Melville frankly confessed his motive for continuing the deception, which a love of frolic had first suggested—namely, a wish of being assured of her regard, ere he ran

the risk of incurring his uncle's displeasure by explaining himself. This both gratitude and policy opposed his doing, for sir James had been to him as a father from a very early period, and his own fortune was trifling, compared to what he might inherit from him, if he retained his favour. To do so, of course, was his earnest wish; but sir James had long since given him to understand that he had fixed on a particular alliance for him; and he was not without an apprehension that his disappointing him, with regard to this, might be the means of depriving him of what he so highly valued.

The hazard, however, must be incurred, and Melville proceeded to assure Lavinia, that ere this it would have been the case, but that, as he was on the very point of addressing his uncle on the subject of his attachment to her, he received a letter from him, intimating his intention of coming down almost immediately to the Vale, and in consequence of which, he decided

on putting off his intended explanation till his arrival, conceiving, if any thing could induce him to overcome the resentment, or forgive the disappointment it might occasion him, it would be the sight of the lovely object of his attachment.—

“I will not, however, attempt to disguise,” pursued Melville, “that I greatly fear his admitting no excuse for the disappointment of a plan his heart has been so long set upon. Who the person is, whom he chose to make choice of for me, I never could, by any chance, discover; so anxious, however, has he been for me to keep myself disengaged till my introduction to her, that it has been the means of causing me to be almost dragged about, both on the Continent and at home, lest my long continuance in any one particular place should occasion the frustration of his plan.

“That I shall greatly grieve at exciting his displeasure, I cannot deny, loving him as I do with all the ardent affection of a son; but the conviction that I do not me-

rit it, for disappointing so unreasonable a plan, will, I make no doubt, in a very short time, mitigate the pain it must at first cause me. It never, indeed, was my intention to have given myself up to his disposal as a mere machine, but the compliment of passive obedience I deemed due to him, till after I had seen the lady selected for me; for, as she might, I considered, prove a person every way agreeable, why needlessly anger him, I argued with myself, by avowing what my determination was, should this happen not to be the case?

“ But any further dissembling with him is now out of the question, and should his conduct evince his conceiving, from the obligations conferred upon me, that he had a right to impose fetters on my mind, and restrict that freedom of choice, without which we must be miserable, I shall certainly endeavour to reconcile myself to the result of his displeasure. In that case, a great deal of show and splendour must

certainly be relinquished; but, with such a companion to share the partial retirement to which I may be driven," and he fondly pressed the hand of Lavinia to his lips, "what will there be wanting for real happiness? for

' —Happy they, the happiest of their kind,
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.'

"But let us hope the best, or, at least, hope as long as we can; though the temper of my uncle is warm, and somewhat peremptory, his disposition is generous; and when every thing comes to be considered, and when he comes to see my sweet Lavinia, I am inclined at times to flatter myself he will not prove implacable in his resentment."

What a similarity, Lavinia observed, between their fates—both, in a degree, under the control of others, and both destined for beings they never saw! and she explained more fully than he yet understood them, what she was taught to suppose were the intentions of her guardian,

and as much as she knew concerning herself. This indeed was very little, or rather nothing; the Wheatleys were the only friends she knew, but she had reason to conclude, from the education she had received, the expence that was lavished on her, and the introduction that had been obtained for her into society, that, whoever was the person that interested himself about her, he was a person of consequence and fortune.

Finally, without puzzling themselves with conjectures, they engaged themselves as firmly to each other as vows could engage them—Melville protesting that no earthly consideration should induce him to give her up, and Lavinia, in her turn, declaring that not all the guardians in Christendom should prevent her being his. For the present, however, it was settled, that the greatest caution should be observed with respect to their mutual sentiments, both on account of sir William and Mr. Wheatley, from both being in the con-

fidence of the parties they were apprehensive of offending.

That Mr. Wheatley would hesitate a moment in betraying her, if he had a suspicion of the truth, Lavinia could not imagine; Melville was almost equally persuaded that sir William would do the same with regard to him, from his frequent rallying allusions to be sure they appeared, of what he knew his uncle's intentions were respecting him, and his hope that they might not be disappointed.

What an evening of bliss was this, that accounted for every thing that had rendered her uneasy, to Lavinia—reconciled her to her lover, and relieved her from all further terror about her guardian! No matter what he had planned or intended, she was now secure of protection from him. The scene around her, the enchanting one, in which this explanation took place, served, if possible, to heighten her happiness, by the delight which, of itself alone, it was calculated to impart to her feelings. The grotto brought to the

imagination all that had ever been read of fairy palaces; the lights were so disposed, as to give it the appearance of being resplendent with sunshine; the soft green moss that embossed it in many places, was interwoven with violets and primroses, forming the ciphers of the young ladies assembled there. The alabaster vases were filled with glowing flowers; and when there was a pause in the dancing, the music that then ceased within was taken up by invisible musicians without, and gradually changing into soft and tender airs, was diffused through the woods as if by enchantment.

But for the constraint which the lovers deemed it prudent to impose on themselves at the Vale, they sought to indemnify themselves elsewhere; this led to a want of caution, that rendered the escaping Charybdis of very little consequence, by casting them upon Scylla. In a word, they now and then forgot the equal necessity for wariness with regard to Mr. Wheatley as to sir William, and the con-

sequence was, their soon being involved in a most unpleasant predicament.

CHAPTER III.

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“ Oh, Memory, thou fond deceiver !

Still importunate and vain ;

To former joys recurring ever,

And turning all the past to pain.”

THE continual evasions of Lavinia, when at home, the confusion she frequently betrayed, when interrogated as to where she had been, and her occasional thoughtfulness, so unusual with her, united to two or three accidental encounters in the vicinity of the cottage, with the still-supposed Mr. Denny Scanlen, began to raise strange surmises in the breast of Mr. Wheatley, such as determined him on keeping a stricter watch than he had ever done before on Lavinia; but this was not all—it would not be amiss, he thought, to ad-



monish the young man of what the consequences of attempting to draw her into any indiscretion would inevitably be; and accordingly, having decided on the admonition, set out in quest of him to O'Connor's; but here he could obtain no information about him; Mrs. O'Connor, exasperated beyond description, at what she called his slighting and unnatural conduct, in never having called, after the night of the entertainment, notwithstanding the reception he had met with from her and her husband, and their kind offer of a bed to him, spoke of him in terms of the highest indignation, declared she knew nothing more about him, than that he was still slinging about the neighbourhood, she dared to say for nothing good, since, if it was, why should he take such pains to hide himself, as it was easy to see he did, from no one's being able to find him? but, to their cost perhaps, some one would yet discover the tricks he was about; and, in short, expressed herself in such a way,

about her supposed cousin, as sent Mr. Wheatley away from her in a state of extreme agitation; but notwithstanding which, ere he took a step that might prove irreparably injurious to Lavinia, he resolved to be first assured there were sufficient grounds to justify it, and accordingly resisted the impulse that would have led him directly to address her guardian on the subject of what he apprehended.

As long as she was at the Vale, to which she went, and whence she always returned, in lady Erin's carriage, he was perfectly easy about her, but, except then, equally restless and unhappy, insomuch, that whenever she was now at home, he remitted going out more than he had ever done before; and if he missed her from the house, was instantly in quest of her, not without giving his wife a hint to have an eye on her; but Lavinia, quite as much on the watch to get out as they were to prevent her, still contrived, from time to time, to effect her escape to the place where she was in the habit of meeting

Melville, since restricted by the whim of Mr. Wheatley from taking any of her usual rambles; this was the arbour in the garden, which, from being at the very extremity of it, and connected with the fields, prevented their being agitated, while conversing there, with any apprehensions of a surprise.

It so happened, however, that the means it afforded for a precipitate retreat, if requisite, at length struck Mr. Wheatley as well as it had done them, and made him wonder that it had never once occurred to him before, on missing Lavinia, to search for her there; of course he remained silent on the subject, both of what he thought, and the stupidity he conceived he had been guilty of; but in an evening or two after, on suddenly missing Lavinia from the parlour, where he had for some time been engaged at backgammon with a neighbour who had dropped in, and learning from Rosetta, who was occupied by a book, that she had been for some time absent from it, searching for some

work, she believed, he made a pretext for asking his wife to take his place, and forthwith proceeded to the arbour. Aware, however, that he could not approach it from the house without the chance of being seen, notwithstanding there being some intercepting shrubs and hedges, the moon shining very bright, he turned up the lane, for the purpose of entering the garden from the adjoining field. Cautiously as he advanced, however, and close as he kept to the hedge, he was nevertheless discovered.

Melville, however, did not attempt to stir, till he saw him turn into the field; he then, at one spring, cleared the hedge, but not without first whispering to Lavinia not to move, lest her being seen flying from the place should be a means of confirming the suspicion that had probably brought him there.

It was with the greatest difficulty Lavinia could prevail on herself to follow this advice, so great was her dread of encountering Mr. Wheatley just at this precise

instant, from the cause to which she at once surmised his evidently having come in search of her was owing. However, she conceived it was the best plan to be pursued, and accordingly forcing herself to remain, she tried to compose and collect herself.

The moment Mr. Wheatley had admitted himself from the field into the garden, he darted to the arbour; but a glance sufficed to let him see there was no one in it but Lavinia; but that there had not been some one else there, he was not equally satisfied, and accordingly looked about him in every direction, but to no purpose; but that she had merely come there for the purpose of indulging her meditations, was a thing not to be imagined; and what really was the fact suddenly striking him to be the case, his rage at finding himself so completely baffled and outwitted was hardly controllable.—“So, Miss Audley,” he cried, reentering the arbour, which for a moment he had quitted to look about him, “so, is this the place in which you



generally keep your work, for I understood you quitted the parlour in search of some?"

"Oh dear, no—no, sir!" replied Lavinia, and she affected a laugh at the idea; "how could you suppose so? But I—I was seized with such a—a sudden headach, that I thought a little air——"

"If you had thought proper to tell Rosetta you were coming here, you might have had her company, I dare say; for, I make no doubt, she too is sufficiently romantic to like an arbour by moonlight."

"Y-e-s, sir, I dare say I might; but she appeared so agreeably engaged with her book, that I did not like to disturb her."

"How considerate!" replied Mr. Wheatley, with a sneer; "and that was your only reason for not asking her company? Recollect yourself! you were not prevented by the idea that she might have been an interruption—a check—a hindrance! The fact is, Miss Audley," no longer able to smother his passion, "who is it you had here with you?"



“ Who is it I had here with me, sir !” cried Lavinia, almost unconsciously repeating his words, so great was the terror excited by his vehemence ; “ why, who do you suppose I should have had here with me, sir ?”

“ No matter, madam, who I suppose—I demand an answer to my question.”

“ Your question appears a very odd one, sir ; but, since you force me to answer it, I—I reply, no one.”

“ You tell me this ! you deny that any one has been sitting in this arbour with you ! take care—beware how you commit yourself !” and he looked steadily in her face, which, unfortunately, the moon shining full into the arbour (it was the first time Lavinia had ever had an inclination to quarrel with the moon) gave him a full view of.

“ Really, sir—you—you—are enough to agitate any one by these inquisitorial questions ! I am sure I see no great use in answering them, since you seem not inclined to believe me.”

“ And you persist in wanting to make me think you have not been conversing with any one here?”

“ I do, indeed !” replied Lavinia, with emphasis, as this actually happened to be the case.

“ Degenerate, degraded girl !” exclaimed Mr. Wheatley, with a burst of passion that made Lavinia tremble; “ how——”

“ Indeed, sir—you—you must excuse me,” interrupted Lavinia, “ but I can stop no longer here !” attempting, as she spoke, to effect her escape.

But he opposed it with violence—“ No, madam !” he cried, “ you shall not stir till you hear me. Degenerate, degraded girl ! I repeat; how impossible to give utterance to the indignation your conduct has excited ! After all the pains that were bestowed on you—the expectations you were taught to indulge—to let it be said that the one have all been thrown away, and the others disregarded ! But I told you I was not to be deceived ! I may not perhaps have awakened compunction, but

I think it hardly possible but you must feel shame, when you behold this evidence of your falsehood !" and, to her utter confusion, he held up to her view, at the moment, one of Melville's gloves, which, in the hurry of escape, had dropped from him, and Mr. Wheatley had had his eye on, from the moment of his entering the place. " Now, madam, what can you say for yourself—what suppose I must think of you ?"

But questions were useless ; Lavinia was struck dumb, and perhaps motionless, for she remained transfixed, as it were, to the spot, without even the power of withdrawing her eyes from his, till Mr. Wheatley took her sternly by the arm, to conduct her to the house.

On reentering it, he motioned her to her chamber, and remained in the hall till he was assured she had obeyed him. But he could not, at the moment, have given her a command that could have been more agreeable. She was indeed ashamed, confused, distressed, at having incurred such

reproaches as he had uttered. That she did not altogether merit them, was certainly some consolation; she knew she had not degraded herself by any unworthy attachment, but it was a severe mortification to her to think she must remain lessened in his eyes for some time; and the idea of the falsehood, too, she felt herself compelled to, was wounding to her feelings, insincerity of all kind being abhorrent to her principles, as well as contrary to her natural disposition. She tried to hope, however, that the affair would soon blow over, like a transient storm. She concluded she should be required to give up Mr. Denny Scanlen; and as this was a thing she could most readily promise to do, she supposed, when once she had bound herself to this effect, she should hear no more of what had happened.

In imagining so, however, she was a little too sanguine. To free himself from all further anxiety about her, and prevent the possibility of being accused of wilful blindness to her imprudence, from inter-

ested motives, Mr. Wheatley decided on no longer concealing it from the person who had intrusted her to his care, and accordingly, ere he retired to rest that night, addressed a letter to him on the subject of it, informing him that he would no longer take upon himself any responsibility about the young lady.

The moment his visitor was gone, he proceeded to inform his wife and daughter, to their utter surprise and distress, of what had occurred ; sternly demanding of the latter, if she had had any suspicion of what was going forward.

Rosetta, in the most solemn manner, assured him she had not ; and, as a proof that she had no reason for this, mentioned what occurred in the last accidental meeting with the young man, the scorn and downright displeasure Lavinia had manifested on his joining them, forgetting, to be sure, to say any thing of the emotion she had afterwards betrayed on his leaving them, but which assuredly had been so



soon got the better of, as not to have made any serious impression on her memory.

“Artifice! sheer artifice all this!” exclaimed Mr. Wheatley, as he paced up and down the room, in a manner that evinced the most extreme agitation.—“Good God! how this girl has lost herself! she for whom such fond expectations were formed, for whom such happiness was planned! What a shock, what a heart-break, will be what I have to communicate about her! But it must be done,” he said to himself; “nothing could induce me to take any longer charge of her, than till I can give her up into the hands from which I received her.—’Tis well for you,” he cried, suddenly turning upon his daughter, “that you have been able to acquit yourself of being her confidant in this disgraceful affair; had you not been able to do so—had you allowed me to imagine that you encouraged her in her imprudence by concealing it, knowing, as you have all along done, that I have held myself answerable for her conduct, I never would have for-



given you. Should she choose to speak to you on the subject of what passed this evening, you have my permission to listen to her, on condition that it is for the purpose of admonishing her of the conduct she has been guilty of, but on no other; not for the purpose of indulging in the whine of sentimental sympathy, and weeping with her over the terrible cruelty that has prevented her running away with a handsome young vagabond!"

"My dear," said his wife, in a tone of remonstrance, seeing Rosetta could not restrain her tears, "why do you speak in this manner? I am sure our Rosetta has given you no cause of complaint."

"No, thank Heaven, she has not!" exclaimed Mr. Wheatley, with fervour; and recalled to recollection by this remonstrance, he took his gentle girl in his arms, and—"Forgive me, my dear child," he said, "for having affected you in this manner!" and Rosetta felt him fondly pressing her to his bosom, and another tear than her own bedewing her cheek as

he spoke; "as your mother says, and I bless my God for it, I have no cause of complaint against you; I can lay no error, no indiscretion to your charge."

Rosetta made a faint effort, as if to release herself from his arms, and a convulsive sob burst from her.

"But I see," continued Mr. Wheatley, "your spirits are overpowered, by your distress about Lavinia. I cannot wonder at it, from your affection for her. Unhappy girl! what a source of pain to all her friends, instead of the happiness she was so eminently calculated to be to them! but regret is useless." Then saying he would not detain her, as rest might enable her to recompose herself, he again kissed her tear-bedewed cheek, and, bidding her good night, she retired.

To think of rest without looking in upon Lavinia was out of the question; but she could not do this till she had a little subdued the emotion with which she had repaired to her chamber. Censure perhaps from her father would not have pained

her so much as had his fond commendations, for there was a consciousness; but still, while she did not intentionally wish to deceive him—while her upright heart involuntarily shrunk from what she did not conceive merited, she could not bring herself to confess what must be a means of imbittering his tranquillity. She at length softly opened Lavinia's door, and found her sitting at a table, apparently reading, for in reality her thoughts wandered so, or rather her mind continued so perturbed, that she knew not the subject she appeared engrossed by, though she had taken up a book, to try and enable her to tranquillize herself.—“ So,” she cried, the moment she caught the eye of Rosetta, starting up, and throwing aside the book, “ so there is no interdiction then against your speaking to me !”

“ Ah, Lavinia !” exclaimed Rosetta, shaking her head, “ how could you possibly——”

“ Oh !—no more ah-ing, or oh-ing, I beseech you, my dear creature, to-night ! for,

really, after what has passed, I have not strength of nerve."

"Ay, after what passed, indeed, to-night! Oh, Lavinia! again I say, how could you possibly allow yourself to be drawn into——"

"So your father has been telling his story," said Lavinia, interrupting her. "Well, one story is good till another is told; but don't look so alarmed—I am not going to deny any thing he has been saying, only that I am not quite so bad as I know he has been representing me; however, appearances were, I acknowledge, against me; and as there is no castle of truth here, like madame de Genlis's, to thrust us into, why we must be judged by them; but if I promise to be a good girl for the future, I hope papa will forgive, remembering, both with regard to himself and me, that—'to err, is human—to forgive, divine.'"

"Really, Lavinia, I am surprised to hear you talking in this manner, with almost

your usual giddiness. I really almost expected to have found you——”

“Expiring!—well, and would not that have given you a great deal more trouble than to have found me as you now do? for,” throwing her arms round her neck, and fondly kissing her, “I know it would be a hard thing to turn my Rosetta’s heart against me!”

“Well, the fonder, you know, I was of you, the greater pain you must suppose I should have felt at your being accused of any impropriety; and therefore, if you had no regard or consideration for yourself, out of regard and consideration for your friend——”

“Oh, no abstract reasoning, I beseech you, my dear girl!” cried Lavinia; “you know it was a thing I never liked; and, I am sure, just at this instant less than ever: but I see—yes, I feel,” observing the traces of tears on Rosetta’s cheek, and how pale she looked, “that I must have given you pain; well, need I say that I grieve



at the thought, or what I should suffer if I imagined——” But suddenly checking herself——“ I see you want rest, my dear girl, and, Heaven knows, so do I, after the agitation I have gone through, so I won’t detain you from it,” fearing, if they remained much longer together, she might betray herself; “ and perhaps it may be granted me the happiness of yet making amends to my friends for the uneasiness, trifling and giddy as I may appear, I am sensible I must now have given them; but assuredly not, in justice to myself I must say, through any—any wilful imprudence; as a proof of which,” she, half-laughingly, exclaimed, in the words of the Roman Vestal——

“ To you, ye gods, I make my last appeal,  
Or clear my virtues, or my crimes reveal.”

That the matter would pass over so lightly, as it was evident to Rosetta, from her manner, she flattered herself, Rosetta was decidedly convinced would not be the case; not that she was aware of her father’s



intention of writing to her guardian, he for many reasons choosing to keep that a secret, till he knew what the result of it would be; but she saw him too thoroughly incensed—that he considered the affair in too serious a light, to let her suppose he would pass it over in the manner Lavinia seemed to think.

All Lavinia's courage was requisite to enable her to face Mr. Wheatley the ensuing morning; but she knew her remaining in her room would have an appearance of sulkiness, and therefore forced herself to make her appearance, as usual, at breakfast.

Mr. Wheatley noticed her neither by word or look, and the cheek of Lavinia flushed to a deep crimson at this treatment. His manner occasioned a general restraint, and never perhaps were a party more impatient to be at liberty again to separate than the present.

The moment this unsocial meal was over, Lavinia withdrew to her apartment,

and Mr. Wheatley immediately set about inquiring of his daughter whether any thing particular had occurred between them?

Rosetta told the truth, by replying in the negative; and he then proceeded to give orders, that on no account whatever any message should be delivered to Lavinia, or any one admitted to her, even though it were from the Vale, it being his secret determination not to allow her to quit the house, till an answer was received from her guardian.

That he would not immediately permit her to do so again, except to go to the Vale, Lavinia made up her mind, but of his preventing her visiting there, as usual, she had not the slightest suspicion, believing his doing so would be in absolute opposition to the commands of her guardian, whom she had many reasons for conceiving he was strictly bound to obey; and though vexed and surprised therefore at two days elapsing without any invitation or message from it, she still had not

an idea that this was owing to him. Two such horrible days Lavinia had never passed; Mr. Wheatley still continued to conduct himself as if he knew not there was such a person in the same apartment; and his wife and daughter, fearful any kindness they shewed her might be construed into a rebuke for his harshness, hardly noticed her more.

Well, really if this was not enough to drive any one to an act of desperation, she knew not what was; but it could not last long—he must get tired of it himself; and really, terrific as his violence was, she felt she would prefer having him rave at her, to having him stalking about like a dumb necromancer. What he wanted, or why he had not immediately required her to give up Denny Scanlen, she could not conceive; however, she supposed it would come to this at last, and then there would be an end of the affair; and by not seeing Melville again, except at the Vale, she should avoid getting herself into another scrape.

Sooner than two days Mr. Wheatley could not receive an answer to his letter; by return of post he received it, full of the indignation, grief, and vexation, he had anticipated his communication occasioning, and desiring, that immediately after its receipt, the young lady should be brought up to Dublin; but to obey this peremptory order was not in the power of Mr. Wheatley; the assizes had just commenced, and till they were over, no conveyance of any description could be procured; he was therefore obliged to write to excuse a short delay, but with an assurance that he hoped would quiet any uneasiness it might create, that till he had delivered up his charge, his watchful vigilance over her should never be remitted.

As Lavinia was to know nothing of her intended departure, till it was on the very point of taking place, nor even then whither she was going, Mrs. Wheatley was apprized of it, in order that whatever preparations were necessary for it might be made by her; but with a strict command

against letting Rosetta know any thing about it, lest, through weakness or inadvertence, she should betray it to Lavinia, and thus be the means of occasioning him additional trouble.

Mrs. Wheatley promised what was required; but when she came to reflect on the additional grief it would be to her daughter, the loss of her beloved companion, without being allowed to bid her farewell, she could not bring herself to adhere to this; in disclosing however to Rosetta what she had been so strictly commanded to keep secret from her, she exacted a promise, with regard to keeping it from Lavinia, similar to that which she had been herself obliged to give, with regard to keeping it from her, and which Rosetta kept exactly in the same way; for on Lavinia's shortly after entering the apartment where she sat, nearly overwhelmed by the disclosure, and half playfully, half tenderly, inquiring what was the matter, with a burst of impassioned grief she threw her arms round her neck,

and as she fondly pressed her to her bosom, demanded, in accents scarce articulate, how she could have had the cruelty to act in such a manner as to occasion what was about happening?

Lavinia, somewhat startled, or rather with a fearful misgiving of what she was to hear, inquired what she meant?

“Oh, cannot you guess?—must you not anticipate?” said Rosetta. “Could any thing, almost, do you imagine, distress me as I am now distressed, but the idea of our being separated!—of your being torn, dragged away from us! Such is the cruel command of your guardian, in consequence of the communication made him by my father; and as I make no doubt it is entirely to his displeasure against him, for what has happened, there is very little probability I think of his ever allowing us to see or hear any thing more about you. And how, how can I endure to think,” wringing her hands, in unutterable agony, “of losing you for ever!—the being whom I have so long re-



garded in the light of a sister—the only confidant of my sorrowing heart—the dearest friend that was ever given to any one!”

Lavinia, though nearly overpowered by the shock she had sustained, made an effort to try and sooth Rosetta.—“Take comfort, my dearest girl,” she cried, but trembling, through agitation, as she spoke; “it may not be so bad as you imagine. Whatever may the cruel intentions of this unknown guardian be, we may yet be able to contrive some mode of communication.”

“Oh, no, no!” cried Rosetta, despairingly; “such a thing is next to impossible; for as I neither know who he is, or where he lives, and cannot hope to obtain the information from my father, I have no clue by which to trace you—while you, on the other hand, will, I dare say, be so watched and guarded, as to render it impossible for you to do what you wish.”

Lavinia now, in her turn, wrung her hands, and gave way to the most violent

despair; and—"Your father," she said, "your father, Rosetta, I have to thank for the barbarity of betraying me into the power of a person that may be capable of what you have suggested, of separating me from those I love for ever, and even restricting me from the slightest communication with them. Oh, Rosetta! but on your account, and your mother's, I think I never could forgive him!"

Rosetta, covering her face with her handkerchief, wept still more violently; but Lavinia, from being weeping herself in the same way, could not immediately make another effort to console her; and was this the way her Elysian prospects were to end—her hopes of happiness to terminate, in finding herself in the power of a person whose idea had never yet recurred to her mind without inspiring it with something of dread, from the fancies with which her imagination was haunted about him! But was there no way of preventing what was intended? Could she but apprise Melville of what was threat-

ened, she knew he would risk every thing to hinder her being torn from him: but how was this to be accomplished? Or, supposing she could contrive to let him know her situation, was there time for him to form any plan to rescue her from it? She now recollected she had not asked Rosetta the time fixed for her departure, and was eagerly turning to make the inquiry, when, recollecting the necessity there was for the greatest caution, even to Rosetta, lest a suspicion of what she meditated might seal her lips, through dread of her father, with regard to the information she required from her, she checked herself, nor permitted herself to ask the question, till, by a few turns about the room, she had a little recovered from the flutter of spirits into which the sudden hope of being able to avoid what was intended had thrown her.

“The day after to-morrow is the day, I understand, fixed for your departure,” said the still-weeping Rosetta, replying to her inquiry; “at a very early hour in the

morning, my mother has given me to understand, a chaise will be at the door for you."

"The day after to-morrow!" Lavinia internally repeated, with a silent ejaculation of gratitude. Then there was hope, for there was an intervening day for something to be thought of—something to be planned. But every minute was precious; if she could not accomplish seeing Melville that night, there might as well not have been the day she thought so much about; and believing she could induce the girl who attended on her and Rosetta to be the conveyer of a note to him, she became all impatience to get to her chamber, for the purpose of writing it; but what pretext to make for leaving Rosetta she knew not; at length indisposition was the only one she could think of, and accordingly feigning a sudden headach, through the agitation she had been thrown into, she left her, as if to try what lying down for a little while might do for removing it, with a solemn promise, that no alteration in her manner,

for the remainder of the time she staid at Rosehill, should give Mr. Wheatley any cause to suspect the intimation she had received.

The instant she gained her chamber, she bolted herself in, that there might be no unpleasant surprise, and having finished her note, placed herself at the window, to watch for the expected messenger, who was often passing backwards and forwards. The following was the purport of what she wrote to Melville:—

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“ *To Sedley Melville, Esq.*

“ I dare say you will hardly be able to make out this, I write in such trepidation; but you will not be much surprised at my agitation, when I inform you that I have this instant discovered, that in consequence of the other night, Mr. Wheatley wrote to my guardian, and that the result has been, an order to convey me immediately to him. The day after to-morrow is the one fixed for my depar-



ture, which it appears I was to know nothing of till the very moment it was about taking place. Should you wish to bid me, what, under all circumstances, may very likely be a last farewell—since, as I neither know to whom I am going, nor whither, I cannot give my friends any clue, by which they may be enabled to obtain any further information concerning me—I will, if possible, see you to-night in the arbour; but it cannot be at a very early hour, as I am literally a prisoner at present, and in every way indeed rendered most unhappy and miserable.

“Lest any thing cross should occur to prevent the farewell I should be glad to receive, accept mine now, and with it, for your happiness in life, the sincere wishes of

“LAVINIA.

“*Rosehill.*”



We need scarce say what the emotion of Melville was at the receipt of this billet. By this time, indeed, Lavinia had so



completely entwined herself round his heart, that the idea of losing her was not endurable. He briefly answered it, with an assurance that he should both wait and watch all night, rather than forego the hope or chance of seeing her, and conjuring her to compose, and endeavour to keep up her spirits, as something must and should be devised for preventing what was threatened.

Well, so far all was well; her *billet* had been safely delivered, and an answer received; but, watched and restricted as she was, how was the appointment she had indirectly made with her lover to be kept? that was the question. But for almost every thing in life a remedy can be found: the window of her chamber was low, and immediately beneath it was a garden-seat, by means of which she had not the slightest doubt that she should be able both to get out and return, without either danger or difficulty.

The remainder of this day passed, like the two preceding ones, in gloom and un-

social reserve; and it was evidently a relief to the party, the arrival of the hour that furnished them with a pretext for separating. Lavinia made her headach—not indeed that Rosetta would almost have attempted to detain her, so distressed was she by her father's conduct towards her—an excuse for immediately passing through Rosetta's chamber to her own, where, having secured the door, she sat watching, and sometimes weeping with apprehension, till she was assured Rosetta had been some time in bed, when, with the assistance of the garden-chair, she adroitly got out of the window, and in a few minutes after was weeping on the shoulder of her lover.—“Tear you from me!” exclaimed Melville, holding her to his bosom, as if there was an attempt made at the instant to do so; “no, not while I have an arm to hold you to my heart!” and he proceeded, without further delay, to unfold to Lavinia the plan which had suggested itself to him, for the prevention of what was dreaded.

Their situation was desperate; Lavinia acknowledged she could see no way to hinder this; and, in acknowledging it, could of course start no argument against it, or make any objections; and finally an elopement was agreed on the next night, by which time Melville undertook to have every thing ready for their proceeding to Scotland.

To think of keeping secret from Donaghue what was in agitation, was out of the question; neither his regard for him, nor the assistance he required from him in the affair, would permit of this; for disliking, on many accounts, to intrust his own servant with a knowledge of it, he meant to take Cormick in his place, and procure the attendance of his mother for Lavinia. Accordingly, the moment he returned from arranging the matter with Lavinia, he hastened to impart it to his friend. Donaghue heard him with regret, fearful of what the consequences might ultimately be, of disappointing the expectations his uncle had so long cherished. Remon-

strance, however, was now useless, nor could he bring himself to censure or find fault with him for acting as he did, but too conscious he would himself have acted exactly in the same way, if similarly situated. Checking, therefore, all indication of what he felt, and trying to hope the best, he readily promised what he required.

The corporal was immediately summoned, and the necessary communication made to him. He undertook disclosing whatever was requisite to his mother, and having her prepared against the time appointed, and who, brisk, hale, and hearty, was nearly as well qualified as himself to be engaged in an adventure. Along the coast in this direction were a number of small vessels, sufficiently safe and commodious for so short a trip as that to Scotland, and one of these Cormick was instructed to secure; and through his active exertions, long before the ensuing night, every thing was finally prepared, and ready for the lovers.

To guard against the possibility of sus-

picion, Melville thought it expedient to appear to have left the neighbourhood; and, accordingly, immediately after breakfast the next morning, rode over to the Vale, for the purpose of taking a short leave, under the pretext of being about joining a shooting party at the house of a gentleman some miles off, and which indeed he had previously meditated for a few days. He contrived to get his own man out of the way, by finding an occasion for sending him to Dublin; and, after riding some miles from the castle, to a place where Cormick had appointed to meet him with a disguise, returned through by-roads to it.

Donaghue could not avoid dining at the Vale, but he promised to be home sufficiently early to assist him in getting off Lavinia. About half a quarter of a mile from Rosehill, there was a little creek, in which a boat was stationed to receive her; and about eleven o'clock, when the fashionable world, by dressing, are preparing for their nightly vigils, and the unfashion-



able, by undressing, to recruit themselves after "this day's work, or strengthen themselves for morrow's next design," the friends set out for her residence, attended by Cormick, the nurse having previously been sent on board.

On reaching the harbour, Melville made the concerted signal by shaking the bushes, but for a minute it was not replied to, and his heart began to throb with apprehension; but in the next, timidly emerging from it, appeared Lavinia, and he flew forward to receive her, at the gate opening from the field to the road. For an instant, indeed, her courage had faltered; and notwithstanding all her love for Melville, her apparent giddiness, the natural delicacy of her sex made her wish she had not been compelled to such a step. As the hour for her flight approached, not all her ardent affection for Melville, the idea of being about to be united to the being whom she loved with all the sincerity of her nature, or her final deliverance from the power of a person whom she could



never think of without a feeling of dread, could prevent a thousand timid fears and fond regrets, such as more than once made her gaze on Rosetta, with a degree of emotion that must have created some suspicion, but for its being accounted for by what Rosetta had herself told her.

She was a good deal confused by seeing Donaghue; but his gentle manners soon reassured her, as much as she could then be possibly reassured; and the arrangements Melville informed her of having made, tended still more to recompose her: still, however, she remained extremely agitated, so much so, as sometimes to have seemed to have rendered her lover agitated, so that more than once Donaghue deemed it necessary to offer the support of his arm also to her trembling steps.

At length they reached the romantic, and now moon-illuminated creek—for it was a night so bright, as perfectly to be adapted for an exploit of the kind—where the boat was waiting for them.—“Now, my Lavinia,” cried Melville, attempting

to lift her up in his arms, on their coming within sight of it, but she checked him for an instant, to extend her hand to Donaghue.

Fervently pressing it to his lips—"Heaven bless you!" he exclaimed; "henceforth my sister—for Sedley and I have long considered one another as brothers. May you both be as happy as I wish you! and if it can add the slightest additional satisfaction to your feelings, there lives not on the earth that man to whom, had I been blessed with a sister, I would, with such pride and pleasure, have given her, as to him."

Melville's heart was too full to allow him to speak; he wrung the hand of Donaghue in silence, and in another moment Lavinia was lifted into the boat.

Donaghue remained on the spot where the lovers had left him till he was assured they had gained the vessel, when he began to slowly retrace his way back, happy at the successful termination of the adventure; but still, not without a feeling of perplexity and confusion, at the idea of

the confusion and dismay that would, he was aware, be excited, by the discovery of Lavinia's elopement.

He knew the interest which the family at the Vale took in her welfare, and felt extremely unpleasant at the idea of the distress he accordingly anticipated its occasioning there, as well as elsewhere. But this was not all that rendered him uneasy; he had by this time acquired a sufficient knowledge of sir William's disposition, to know that, with all his feeling, there was a something of sternness in his disposition, calculated to make him deeply resent, and not readily forgive; and if, by any unfortunate chance, it should be discovered that he was any way concerned in what occasioned the frustration of the particular views entertained for Lavinia, and on which sir William so often dwelt, he was not without an apprehension of its being attended with injurious consequences to himself. Yet such was his regard—his friendship for Melville, that, even if this apprehension had sooner occurred, he

knew not, or rather felt convinced he would not have acted differently from what he had done; but though he would have run the same risk again for him, yet, as he certainly did not wish to suffer by it, he resolved to expedite his own marriage as much as possible, lest any thing unlucky should happen.

But what he anticipated from the elopement of Lavinia fell far short of what it occasioned—the confusion, almost distraction of Mr. Wheatley, on the discovery of it, and the nearly equal distress of sir William, to whom he made an immediate communication on the subject, knowing, as he did, the cruel shock it would be to his friend, the total overthrow to the plans that had been so fondly cherished for her happiness.

“ Good God !” a hundred times Mr. Wheatley exclaimed, as he walked about, almost in a state of frenzy, “ why—why did I suffer any thing to retard or delay my departure ! or since delay was unavoidable, why did I suffer myself to slum-

ber or sleep, while I had this unfortunate—this wretched girl under my care! Did I not promise that, while she remained under it, my vigilance should know no relaxation? but how wofully will it now appear that I have kept this promise! Yet who could have thought—who could have imagined? but there must—there must be some treachery in the case!” and no sooner had the thought occurred, than sternly questioning his wife, he drew from her trembling lips a confession of what she had revealed to Rosetta, and from the still more agitated, because still more distressed, Rosetta, an acknowledgment of her having betrayed this to Lavinia.

“So, this is well!” said Mr. Wheatley, in the tone of stifled passion—that forced calmness, that is so horrible, from evincing the terrible workings of the soul at the moment; “to find myself deceived, imposed upon, betrayed, where I had most a right to imagine I might safely repose confidence! but I shall not be unrevenged;

you little knew what you were about," for an instant turning his gleaming eyes upon the trembling culprits, "when you suffered yourselves to act in the manner you have done; but, ere the lapse of many more days, you will, or I am much mistaken, be taught to know, like many others in the world, that truth and sincerity can never be violated with impunity."

This dark hint was not wanting to add to the terrible distress of poor Rosetta and her mother, and completely overwhelmed by their feelings, they sought to be alone, that, without restraint, they might indulge together the anguish excited by the destruction they had every reason to imagine Lavinia had drawn on herself, and the apprehension suggested by this hint of some threatened misfortune.

The absolute dread which Donaghue had of going to the Vale this morning, made him delay as long as possible making his appearance there. He found the family exactly in the state he expected;



and the surprise he was obliged to feign, at their communication, was a most painful effort to him.

“ Could you have believed it possible, Donaghue,” asked sir William, suddenly pausing from walking about the room in the most agitated manner, “ that that girl, looking so elegant, appearing so much every thing one could wish, could so completely have lost and thrown herself away as she has done? But though her having gone off with so low and despicable a fellow as is the one, I understand, she has made choice of, must be an aggravation of her offence, yet not entirely to this will be owing the feelings it will occasion. There were plans formed, expectations indulged, respecting her, for the disappointment of which I know nothing could compensate, and which would have prevented her being allowed to accept the addresses of even a person suitable to her. I grieve—I almost dread to think of what will be felt, on learning their frustration, the per-

son so deeply, so intimately concerned in her welfare being one of my very oldest and most valued friends. So anxious was I to save him from any risk of the cruel shock that now awaits him, that, as you must recollect, I was continually, half jestingly, half seriously, hinting at her being engaged, thus making it a point of honour, that no one should attempt to lay themselves out for her. After this intimation from me, indeed, and my evident solicitude to have it attended to, I never should have forgiven an attempt of the kind, if made by any one I was acquainted with. Neither the person themselves capable of what I should have considered so utter a dereliction from every principle of honour, or any one that, in any way, could have countenanced, or connived at it, would, or could, have been pardoned by me, however great my previous regard or esteem for them; and, indeed, in proportion to these would have been my resentment—for what you may be tempted to pass over in a mere acquaintance, you

cannot permit yourself to forgive in the friend you have trusted and believed in."

Donaghue involuntarily turned to a window, where, for a few minutes, he remained hardly conscious of what he was about, so terribly agitated and embarrassed was he by this declaration of sir William. All the fears that had previously rendered him so uneasy were now confirmed, and he almost trembled to think of the obstacles that might be thrown in the way of his happiness, should its completion be much longer retarded. Yet could sir William, should any thing unwished come to his knowledge, be so unfeeling, he could not help considering, as to attempt to punish him for aiding his friend? but after the avowal he had just made of his sentiments, how ridiculous to have a doubt on the subject! and with almost a sigh of despair, he thought of the length of time that must yet elapse, ere the whole of the preparations deemed requisite for his marriage could be completed.

He felt it a relief when lady Erin de-

sired him to excuse her and Eveleen for a short time, as they deemed it but right to call at Rosehill, to see whether they could do any thing for the alleviation of the distress there, while sir William, at the request of Mr. Wheatley, sat down to communicate to the guardian of Lavinia what had happened; but as he walked about the grounds by himself, he only found himself getting still more perplexed and uneasy, from the still greater opportunity he had for reflecting on the very awkward predicament he stood in.

Two days elapsed without any thing occurring, but such a change in the weather as rendered Donaghue still more restless and unhappy, by the fears it excited for the safety of the lovers, such as rendered him anxious in the extreme for some tidings from them. But his anxiety about them was terminated much sooner than he had either hoped or expected, though not exactly in the way he wished. Just as they got within sight of the wished-for haven, as is but too often the case

in life, they were driven back by a sudden change in the wind, and after being tossed about for two days, found themselves, on the night of the second, on the coast whence they had embarked, and where, to prevent the danger of being driven out again to sea, while the weather continued so unsettled and tempestuous, they landed, at almost the hazard of their lives, and directly proceeded to the castle.

As soon as Donaghue had seen them, a little recovered and refreshed, after the fatigue and danger they had gone through, he proceeded to inform Melville of an express that had that very evening arrived from his uncle, requiring his immediate presence in town, in consequence of a very sudden and severe indisposition with which he had been seized.

The announcement of this mandate threw Melville into a state of the most extreme perplexity and agitation, since there was no alternative, but either to incur the imputation of ingratitude and want of feeling, by not immediately obey-



ing it, or else postpone, for a little longer, making another effort to get to Scotland. Yet how to propose such a thing to Lavinia he knew not; but as something must be decided on without delay, he at length summoned courage to refer himself to her, as the person who, in this case, must positively decide.

Lavinia keenly felt the embarrassing awkwardness of her situation; but the irreparable injury she might be the means of doing him, by preventing his immediate obedience to the summons of his perhaps dying uncle, would not permit her to oppose any obstacles to his leaving her, more especially as she knew it would be no longer than was absolutely necessary; and that under the protection to which he was resigning her, the protection of a person whom he regarded in the light of brother, and with a person so respectable as Mrs. Cormick, to give a kind of sanction to her remaining where she was, she had nothing to dread from want of due attention and delicacy, neither positive censure, should



how she was now situated ever transpire. Still there was a something in this situation revolting to her natural feelings of delicacy and sense of propriety, and that had she conceived it owing to any voluntary act of imprudence, she would severely have reproached herself; but this was not the case; brought up in mystery, she had reason to look with suspicion, if not dread, on the person at whose will she was taught to consider herself, and the natural consequence of this was an effort to free herself from his control.

All matters being arranged, and Melville, with almost a degree of solemnity, having given her up to the care of Donaghue, not another moment was lost in his setting off. Ere he departed, it was settled between him and Donaghue, that he should call in his way at the house of a friend, some miles from Altoir-na-Grenie, for the purpose of getting the doctor invited there, it being deemed expedient by both, that he should, if possible, be got out of

the way at present, his insatiable curiosity inclining him too much to be a Marplot, to render him a safe inmate in a mansion where there was any thing to be kept secret; but unfortunately, on calling at his friend's, Melville found him absent, nor was he expected back for some days, when his lady assured him the invitation he required should be sent.

Of course it were superfluous to say that Donaghue did all in his power to render his fair guest as tranquil and comfortable as existing circumstances could permit her to be. The apartments about being fitted up for the immediate use of his bride were given up to her; she was well supplied with books; every moment he could spare, without exciting suspicion at the Vale, was devoted to her; and Mrs. Cormick was instructed to let her have the entire command of her time, a command that met with ready obedience, from the affection she had conceived for her; while the corporal felt ready to encounter

any danger for her sake, as well as those who were so interested in her safety.

But while Donaghue could not but rejoice at every new occasion that afforded him an opportunity of evincing the sincerity of his friendship for Melville, still he could not but feel, that what had now occurred had placed him in a situation of still greater hazard with regard to sir William; but this was not the only reflection that rendered him restless and agitated at this juncture. The consideration of the happiness of his friend being in his care, rendered him so uneasy and anxious, while away from the castle, lest of any thing unpleasant occurring during his absence, as gradually to have the effect of rendering his visits much later to, and shorter at the Vale, than they used to be, or it was natural to suppose they would have been, the circumstances under which he now visited there considered.

A few days, however, passed away, without any notice having been taken of this, when one evening, just after tea,

that he was decamping, as had lately been the case—"Why what the deuce is the matter, Donaghue?" asked sir William, turning suddenly on him. "If I were Eveleen, I positively should begin to get jealous at the violent hurry I have observed you to be in these two or three last evenings to get off; and then coming so much later than usual of a morning, so much so, as sometimes to keep her waiting to take a walk or ride with you. Take care, my good fellow—you see I am generous to put you on your guard; but the next time I call, don't be surprised if you find me take a peep behind some of your large screens, remembering what our friend Joseph Surface has said of such articles."

Donaghue tried to conceal his confusion by a laugh; but the laugh was a forced one; and lady Jane, whose keen eyes were on him at the moment, perceived it was, and that there was also agitation in his looks. She knew not what to think, but she determined it should not be her fault

if this were long the case ; and what a triumph, what a glorious triumph would it be, if it were discovered that the gentleman was not quite the saint he affected to be, and Eveleen should, after all, be destined to experience disappointment !

Sir William's raillery made Donaghue sensible of the error he had been betrayed into, by his over anxiety about his fair charge. Accordingly he was early at the Vale the next day ; and when we say that the morning was passed almost uninterruptedly with Eveleen, and that he obtained a promise from her, not to be the means of creating any unnecessary delay to their marriage, need we say it passed delightfully. But into what confusion was he thrown by the doctor, for whom the wished for and expected invitation had not yet arrived ! He joined the party at the Vale a little while before dinner, and after laughing and chatting with them for a few minutes, suddenly stalking into the middle of the apartment, drew something from his pocket, and putting his hand be-



hind his back with it, asked the ladies which amongst them had to complain of a recent loss, and what reward would be given to the fortunate finder of the stray article?

“ Oh, a most liberal one !” they all exclaimed; but at the same time not one amongst them could recollect missing any thing.

“ Come, come, ransack your memories, as you do your workbags,” cried Rosebud, “ when you are at a loss for any thing; for I made up my mind to getting a handsome reward, and I don’t like being disappointed.” Still the same answer was returned. “ What, not a trinket? nor a glove? nor such a pretty little article as this?” suddenly holding up to their view a splendid reticule, which that very morning Donaghue recollected to have seen on the arm of Lavinia, when she was taking a turn with him in the king’s dining-room, a favourite promenade of hers, when the doors were closed, to prevent the danger of a surprise, and where, unconsciously



dropped by her, it was afterwards picked up by the doctor, who, under the supposition of its belonging to some one of the ladies of the Vale, who, with lady Erin, were now very often in the habit of calling at the castle, to superintend and give their opinions of the alterations and improvements going on there, had very carefully folded it up in silk paper, and put it in his pocket, to return to the fair owner.

“Ha! what!” exclaimed sir William, with affected surprise. “Where did that come from?”

Rosebud, not quite certain whether the question was in jest or in earnest, very gravely answered, by informing him where and how he had found it.

“Suspicious, I protest!” cried sir William. “I am beginning to think that my raillery last night was not quite so misplaced—that there is a way now of accounting for our being in so great a hurry to get away of an evening, as we have lately been in.”

“I am sure ’tis fortunate for me, my

dear sir, that there is not," cried Donaghue, in a tone of irrepressible peevishness; "for if there were, I have very little doubt but that I should be betrayed to the reprehension I merited.—My dear doctor, where, in the name of wonder, were you roving about the castle, that you picked up poor nurse Cormick's intended present for her little goddaughter?"

"Ah! then does it belong to her?" said the doctor, good-naturedly. "By this time I suppose she's in fine tribulation about it," and he was putting it up again, when lady Jane, who had all this time been watching Donaghue, and saw guilt, conscious guilt in the variations of his changing countenance, carelessly extending her hand, desired to have a nearer view of it.

The doctor was about complying with her request, when Donaghue, who saw there was something in it, probably the letter which Lavinia had that very morning received from Melville, enclosed in

one to him, and who felt sure that her ladyship would not be satisfied without examining the inside as well as the outside, suddenly twitched it from him, and with a peevish "pish!" that it was not worth looking at, crumpled it up, and thrust it into his own pocket.

Conduct so strange could not but excite a stare; for a moment it gave rise to an unpleasant sensation in the mind of sir William, but it was but for a moment, and he then thought no more of it. Not so lady Jane—she dwelt on it with a conviction that determined her to be indefatigable in trying to discover what she thought, but, of course, with the greatest wariness, lest, in trying to injure others, she should eventually only harm herself, well aware, that once detected in any thing of artifice or deception, and we are ever after liable to the suspicion of it.

Donaghue, not able now to consider poor Rosebud in any other light than that of an indirect spy, became more anxious than ever to get rid of him for the

present; but still no invitation came. Why, it may be asked, did not he and Melville decide at once on placing confidence in him? Would not that have been their best plan? But with all their reliance on his good-nature and honour, his ardent zeal in the cause of those he loved and esteemed, they feared to intrust him on this occasion, from the ease with which they were convinced any artful person could draw a secret from him, and he still remained to occasion new embarrassment to his host.

The next morning, ere Donaghue had well sat down to breakfast, lady Erin, who, once or twice before, in the same way, had surprised him, made her appearance with the whole party at the Vale.

Of course he affected all the pleasure that, under other circumstances, he must assuredly have felt on the occasion, but the consciousness of the discovery that could at the instant be made in the castle, took from him the real feeling of happiness.

To be obliged to feign what we know

we ought to feel, and are expected to feel, is, of all things, the most painful. In this distressing predicament was Donaghue at this moment; and what but friendship could have reconciled him to himself, for having allowed himself to be placed in one so embarrassing—one that actually made him wish for the absence instead of presence of her whose beaming smiles, whose lovely countenance, irradiated with pleasure at beholding him, were a tacit reproach on his involuntary insincerity at the instant!

“ Well, now that we are here,” said lady Erin, as they rose from breakfast, “ I think we may as well look at those apartments you were speaking of, since you have so positively declared nothing shall be done to them without the sanction of our taste.”

“ Assuredly, certainly,” said Donaghue, but so extremely confused at the suggestion, that he hardly knew what he was saying; these being the apartments which had been given up to Lavinia, and which,

from being intended for Eveleen, he had determined on having nothing done to till she had first seen them, that her own immediate taste might be consulted. But —“How unfortunate,” he added, as if suddenly recollecting himself, “now I think of it, the key of the door which shuts up the whole suit has been missing this day or two!”

“Oh, no matter,” said lady Erin, “it will give us,” laughing, “the excessive trouble of coming here again.”

The doctor, who all this time had been sitting very demurely, listening to what was going on, in consequence of feeling himself a little offended by the peevishness of Donaghue about the reticule, now suddenly turning to him, demanded—“Who had told him that?”

“What?” asked Donaghue, but in alarm at the question.

“Why, that the key you wanted was lost. Whoever told you so deceived you, for this very morning, as I was coming down to breakfast, I saw the door to



which it belongs lying partly open; and more than that——”

“ Oh, you mistake, you mistake, my dear friend !” said Donaghue, but colouring to the very eyes; and in order to try and conceal his confusion, affecting to be busy in assisting the ladies on with their shawls, a walk being proposed to a part of the grounds that was deemed an advantageous situation for the erection of an ornamental building; “ but I don’t wonder at it, there being so many doors and places alike in this old rambling building.”

Sir William looked steadily at Donaghue; he saw he was flurried, and again the unpleasant sensation of the preceding day was experienced; but, as then, it was but transient—he could not give way to any mistrustful idea concerning him. Yet, as he slowly followed the party, he could not help musing on the strange inconsistencies that often appear in the human character, and now pausing to look back at the windows of the apartments to which admission could not be obtained.

Lady Jane was now confirmed beyond a doubt in her persuasion of Donaghue being a little more a man of the world than his friends at the Vale suspected. Were they people of the world, for instance, like the Magennises, the discovery of this she knew would be a matter of very little, or rather no concern to them; but as they were, she was convinced the very reverse would be the case, and that in all probability it would be the means of depriving him of all further hope of the heiress.

This persuasion decided her on no further delay in trying to effect it, but, Heavens! how stupid they were to render it requisite her taking any pains to enlighten them on the subject! How soon would people of the world have been led to suspect from what they had seen! but no, they were too good to suspect ill in others; sir William, indeed, she thought she had observed eyeing the gentleman keenly, but lady Erin and Eveleen neither appeared in the least degree struck by what was

so evident an evasion about the apartments, his changes of countenance, or a hundred other circumstances, that, to her, would have been "confirmation strong as proofs of holy writ" of there being something wrong, something to conceal; and in her contempt and indignation at what she considered their stupidity, she really believed she would not take the trouble of forcing them to open their eyes, but for the malicious pleasure she took in the anticipation of the pain she was sure the circumstance would occasion; for, let matters end as they would between Donaghue and Eveleen, her hope of ever now attaching him to her was indeed very languid.

But as a vague charge would not answer her purpose, she began to turn in her brain how she should herself be able to positively discover what she wished to discover to others. It was not long ere a plan suggested itself to her for the purpose, and her abigail, who was the person she meant to employ, was accordingly summoned, properly instructed, and with

great pleasure and alacrity undertook the business.

A flirtation had commenced between her and the corporal, who, in consequence of her appearing to admire him, thought he could do no less than return the compliment by appearing to admire her, and it was on this that lady Jane built for the accomplishment of her project. Featherston was instructed to try and betray him, through surprise, into the required disclosure, by affecting to have already a knowledge of the affair—a method which, in similar instances, her ladyship had before found successful.

The corporal, who was not without a pretty tolerable share of vanity, was generally loitering about in the way of the ladies of an evening; and Mrs. Abigail, being now on the watch for him, as she generally was, indeed, when not particularly engaged with her lady, had soon an opportunity of commencing the business she had undertaken. After a little chat, as usual—“ Ah, you men !” she said, in reply

to some compliments of the corporal, "who is to believe a word you say? saying one thing and thinking another, as my lady says; there is not one of you the *himma*-*culate* characters you go for to want to persuade us, poor credulous creatures of the softer sex, to believe. Who that looks at your master but would take him to be half a saint at least? and yet——"

"Yet what, my dear?" said the corporal.

"Oh, no matter, I know what I know; but come, between ourselves, what does he mean to do with somebody, when he's obliged to bring somebody else home to the castle?"

"Somebody!" said the corporal, looking a little earnestly at her; "well, if I know who you mean, Mrs. Featherston, may I be——"

"Oh! what," exclaimed the lady—"but I wont be so *hillbred* as to say what; but will you look me straight in the face now, and tell me that you'll take your book oath that there's nobody in the castle

that your master cares nothink about the folks here knowing of?—No, I see by your colouring you couldn't, nor would it be any good, for 'tis no matter; but maybe I could give a guess why a certain key couldn't be found yesterday, and why——”

“Why then, how in the name of the old one,” demanded the corporal, in a tone of mingled astonishment and alarm, “did you come to know any thing about this business?”

“Oh! so you are going to confess the truth now, because you can't help it, but I am not such a blab as to tell you; a secret once *hentrusted* to my keeping is a secret still. But isn't that master of yours a sad *un* after all, now that he's going to be married, to be going on with such here tricks as these?”

“Why, you don't pretend to insinuate,” said the corporal, “that he has any thing to say to the lady that's concealed in the castle?”

“Don't I?” exclaimed Mrs. Featherston, with a toss of her head.



“No, to be sure you don’t! because, if you did, you know you would be doing him injustice. How the devil you came to hear any thing about her is more than I can guess, and more than I’d have known for the world, because it would make him so uneasy on account of his friend Mr. Melville; but since you’ve heard so much——”

“His friend Mr. Melville!” repeated the lady, scornfully—“oh yes, very likely indeed, that he’d take such pains about concealing a mistress of his! No, no, not quite so heasely hummed as this, I hassure you—that story won’t go down!”

“Why then, if ’tis not true, may I never be married myself,” cried the corporal, “to the girl I love!” and he cast a very significant glance at the lady, though not one exactly in unison with the real sentiments of his heart, as there certainly was more of profession than sincerity in his passion for her.

“I defy you to make me believe it!” said she.

“ Done !” cried the corporal ; “ when I explain matters, you’ll find you’ll say differently ;” and, without further hesitation, he proceeded to do so, disclosing every particular of the affair between Melville and Lavinia, the cause of the elopement, the occasion of their reembarking for Scotland being delayed, and the important reasons there were for keeping her being in the castle concealed from every one, as well as his master’s having had any hand in the business.

“ And you tell me this is all true ?” said Mrs. Featherston, anxious not to be imposed upon, on account of her lady.

“ Why, I’ll swear it !” cried the corporal.

“ Well, do then ; but not by none of your *Hirish* saints, because I don’t know nothing about them.”

“ Well, I’ll—I’ll swear by your own bright eyes,” cried the corporal, “ because I am sure you know something about them, that it is true as that no one can see you without admiring you.”

“ Well, now I believe you,” said the

flattered abigail, highly pleased by his compliments; "but I must be leaving you now, for this is about the time my lady will be wanting to dress for the party the folks here are going to to-night; so, till we meet again, good-bye," extending her lily hand to receive its accustomed salute at parting, from the completely-taken-in Cormick.

At first lady Jane was disappointed by the information she had succeeded in obtaining her, but a moment's reflection sufficed to convince her, that the discovery of his having been concerned in the affair about Lavinia, would prove nearly, if not as entirely, injurious to Donaghue, with regard to sir William, as if what she had imagined had been ascertained.

It was not of this, however, but of the still more heinous offence she had believed him guilty, that she meant to accuse him. With a hope and persuasion that he would enter into no vindication of himself, lest the explanation of the mistake should be a means of betraying the interests of his

friend, she believed him perfectly capable of such generosity; but should it be a stretch beyond him, where Eveleen was at stake, she congratulated herself on the probability, that in trying to escape Charybdis, he would assuredly founder on Scylla. She knew sir William's sentiments respecting the affair of Lavinia—she had heard his passionate avowal of never forgiving any one concerned in aiding in her elopement; and, act as he would, Donaghue had now got himself involved, in a way, she flattered herself, from which he would vainly try to extricate himself.

But though she panted to be revenged on him for all he had made her suffer, yet, as she was convinced the only hope she had of ever drawing him towards her again, was by preventing his ever knowing or suspecting she was in any way concerned in the injury she was now about doing him with sir William, ere she allowed herself to finally carry her plan into effect, she resolved on leaving the Vale, trusting,

by this measure, to escape what she feared. Accordingly, she suddenly pretended to lady Erin to have received an invitation to a lady's house in Dublin, which she could not decline without giving offence; but from which, she assured her ladyship, she should make it a point of returning time enough to be present at the marriage of their sweet Eveleen.

Lady Erin said all that politeness required on the occasion, and lady Jane, without permitting herself almost to pause, set out with her trusty abigail on her pretended visit. Her journey to the metropolis, however, ended at a small obscure town, about fifteen miles from the Vale, whence, the following day, a letter to this effect was dispatched to sir William by post, written by Mrs. Featherston, under her guidance, without which indeed its malicious aim might have been disappointed, as Featherston's writing and orthography were both of a description to render her literary productions rather puzzling:—

“ *To Sir William Erin, Bart.*

“ If sir William Erin has that regard for the happiness of his daughter, which it is but natural to suppose he has, ere he allows the affair between her and Mr. Donaghue O'Brien to proceed any further, it might be advisable to make some inquiry about the fair friend who has, for some time past, condescendingly given her company to that gentleman in the castle, as such appendages to an establishment are not by any means calculated for the promotion of domestic happiness. The hint is given by an enemy to hypocrisy, and a friend to innocence and truth !”

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This production was received by sir William in his library, where he was, alone, at the moment, the morning after it was sent. Such a hint as it contained he could not possibly have deemed himself excusable for disregarding ; but assuredly it would not have produced the striking effect upon him it did, but for what had



recently occurred—the surprise, not unmingled with a dawning of distrust, which the recent conduct of Donaghue had excited—the affair of the reticule, and the mislaid key, with the doctor's positive contradiction about the latter, instantly recurred to his recollection, or rather the confusion, the agitation, they had been the means of occasioning; and, without further hesitation, he ordered the chariot to be got ready, the day being too wet for riding, and forthwith proceeded to Altoir-na-Grenie, without allowing it to be known whither he was going.

The invitation having at length arrived for the doctor, he had left it the preceding day for a short time, delighted to have something new to divert and occupy him till the wedding took place; and, relieved from all apprehension of a surprise from him, and equally divested of all apprehension of it from any other person, through the wetness of the day, Donaghue had invited Lavinia to take a little exercise in

the king's dining-room, or great hall, as it was now as often called, and where they were actually conversing together at the moment that he was thunderstruck by hearing the voice of sir William approaching the apartment, the sound of the carriage having been completely drowned in the blustering of the wind without.—“Fly! fly!” exclaimed Donaghue, in almost breathless agitation, to his fair companion, and opening, as he spoke, the folding doors behind the chair of state for her.

Lavinia obeyed, but, in the hurry of her flight, dropt a shawl she had thrown over her shoulders, but which the extreme confusion he was thrown into not allowing Donaghue to notice, was almost the first thing that caught the keen eye of sir William as he entered.—“This is a—very unexpected pleasure indeed, sir,” said Donaghue, trying to receive him collectedly; “I should hardly have thought that you would have liked to come out such a day.”

“Well, I don't pretend to say I did,”

said sir William; "I neither like to expose my servants or horses to such a day as this; but when one is very anxious about any thing——But what fine affair is this?" suddenly taking up the shawl; "why, really, my dear fellow, this, in addition to what the doctor picked up the other day, is almost sufficient to excite a suspicion that——"

"Oh! nurse Cormick's shawl," said Donaghue, attempting to speak with unconcern, and making an effort to take it from him; "she was here receiving some orders from me, and——"

But he could not finish the sentence——obliged to raise his eyes to sir William's as he proceeded, he found his bent upon him at the instant, in such a manner as made him, he felt, change colour, and involuntarily turn aside his head.

Sir William could hardly command himself any longer, so evident an attempt——so almost impudent a one he considered it——did this appear at imposition. He was determined, however, to go coolly

through the business; flinging away, therefore, the unfortunate shawl, which, from its costliness, it was not to be believed belonged to an old Irish nurse, or at least worn by her trolling about her daily concerns, he took out the letter, and, unfolding it, laid it before Donaghue on the table by which they were standing; and—"There," he said, "I should be glad you would glance your eye over that letter, for there is something in it that concerns you. Only say, on the word of a man of honour, that the insinuation it contains is false—that there is no such person beneath this roof as it alludes to, and from this instant I dismiss it from my thoughts."

He turned away as he spoke, with a degree of emotion not immediately repressible—for how much depended on the next minute! Donaghue had endeared himself to him, and he felt it would be a hard struggle to fling him from his regard, if called upon to do so.

Donaghue — the nearly-overwhelmed

Donaghue, mechanically took up the scrawl of Mrs. Featherston; but, for a moment, a mist seemed to spread itself before his eyes, that prevented his deciphering a line. When, at length, by the dint of exertion, he recovered the power of vision, in what a predicament did he find himself placed—compelled, either to rest under an imputation revolting to every feeling of truth and delicacy to have incurred, or else betray the confidence reposed in him by his friend! for, to pledge his solemn word to a falsehood, was out of the question—principle and pride alike revolted from that; yet, what should he do? good God! what should be done? and he stood unconsciously gazing on the letter, as if still perusing it.

“Well,” said sir William, again approaching the table, “what am I to infer from this silence?”

“That I merit not the questionings this invidious letter occasions.”

“Then you give me to understand the insinuation it contains is false? you assure

me of this, on the word of a man of truth and honour, that there is no person beneath this roof whom you wish to conceal from the knowledge of your friends?"

Donaghue shrunk back—"I should have hoped—I should have trusted," he said, "that no further denial than I have already given to the charge, would have been required of me! Anonymous accusations are of a description that I should conceive a mind of liberality and candour would pay very little attention to, so very questionable must the motive be considered for them."

In a moment recovering his previous sternness, through the indignation excited by this apparent evasion—"Have done, have done with this futile reasoning!" haughtily exclaimed sir William; "it is contradiction, not argument, sir," he still more imperiously added, "I require from you!"

The proud blood of Donaghue mounted up to his very temples, and, for a moment, he was obliged to turn away to re-



collect himself—to recollect that it was the father of Eveleen who had addressed him in this commanding, this authoritative manner.

“Well, sir,” exclaimed sir William again; then, after a slight pause—“But I am answered,” he cried; “were I to hesitate any longer in thinking so, it would seem as if I was soliciting you to falsehood. Your silence has answered me, and I am glad—I am happy,” but, in the hurried tone of extreme agitation, he added, “to find that you are incapable of entirely forgetting yourself—that though, as a lover, you have lost yourself, you have not entirely lost yourself as a man of honour! Farewell, sir—our acquaintance ends here! Regrets for the past I have ever considered a weakness, yet I cannot so entirely command myself at this moment, as not to express my deep concern that we were ever known to each other!”

“Good God! what are you about? What do you mean, sir?” exclaimed Donaghue, rushing between him and the

door. “ You do not want to drive me to distraction and despair? By all my hopes of happiness, both here and hereafter, I am not more undeserving of her, whom I will not resign, than I was at the moment you consented to give her to me !”

“ That I make not the slightest doubt of, sir,” replied sir William, in a sarcastic tone, and with a sneer that suited it; “ I have not the slightest doubt of your principles and sentiments being then what they are now, only not so well known then, or appreciated.”

Again Donaghue was obliged to recollect who it was that was speaking to him, to be enabled to command himself.

“ But you will not resign Eveleen Erin, you say ! You——Were it possible, after the gross insult you have offered her, that she could forgive——could ever degrade herself by another thought about you, I would, dear as she is to my heart as my child, my only child, I would spurn her, so help me, Heaven ! with worse than hatred, with contempt, from my feet. Away,

sir, and let me pass! I am not to be detained here, or in any way trifled with; our conference, if much longer prolonged, may perhaps end more disagreeably than either of us at present apprehend."

Donaghue immediately drew aside, and opened the door for him. But hardly had he seen him drive off, ere he was ready to pursue him, for the purpose of explaining the truth; but a moment's reflection checked this impulse of despair, for what must be the result of such an explanation, but to have the innocent, the confiding Lavinia torn from his protection, and the happiness of his friend destroyed by the eternal separation that would then probably ensue between them. And could he, after this, ever face him again? No, no; and he rejoiced therefore that the timely departure of sir William prevented his being guilty of this involuntary treachery.

A sense of unmerited injuries is bitter and irritating, but still we have a support under them, which fails us when conscious of being the cause of injury to others;

yet to calmly endure the loss of such happiness as he was allowed to look forward to, to have the brim-full cup dashed from his very lips, Eveleen torn as it were from his grasp, how, how was he to endure it, and retain his reason ! and in all the wild extravagance of despair, he threw himself on a seat.

At this moment, while yet every nerve was throbbing with the agony of conflicting feelings, and his brow was almost ghastly through the same, the crimson curtains behind the throne were parted, and the fair face of Lavinia was seen peeping through them ; and—" I may venture in," she said, advancing into the apartment as she spoke. " Such a fright," she continued, " as I was in when I missed this !" taking up the shawl ; " but I hope he went without noticing it ?"

Donaghue faintly smiled.

" I scarce thought to have found you here," she went on, " concluding sir William had called for you. But—but," turning her eyes full upon Donaghue, " what

is the matter? You look as if something had happened to distress you. Nothing un—unpleasant,” and her voice faltered, and she turned of a deadly paleness, “brought sir William here, I hope?”

“No, no, nothing,” replied Donaghue, a little impatiently.

Lavinia looked still more earnestly at him for a moment, and then—“You are deceiving me, I am convinced!” she exclaimed. “Oh, tell me at once what has occurred—what it is I have to fear!”

“Nothing; I protest most solemnly nothing,” said Donaghue—“nothing has occurred in any way to disquiet you, either about yourself or Melville.”

“And can you make the same assurance with regard to yourself?” asked Lavinia anxiously, going to him as she spoke, and hanging over him, as he still sat resting his arm on the back of a chair adjoining the one he occupied, with all the fond solicitude of an affectionate sister, for in the light of a beloved brother her innocent and sensitive heart by this time

regarded him. "Can you," she demanded, "really assure me that nothing has happened to create disquietude on your own account?"

"Y-e-s; why should you imagine I could not?" answered Donaghue, again forcing a languid smile.

"Because your looks are so disturbed."

"Oh, no; you mistake," said Donaghue, rising as he spoke, and endeavouring to shake off the air that had alarmed her; "nothing—nothing is the matter with me, but a headach—the effect of the heaviness of the day, I suppose."

"And I may believe you?" she said, laying her hand on his arm, and looking up in his face.

Donaghue took her hand, and kissed it; and—"Don't you think you may?" he asked evasively.

"I hope so," she replied, but evidently doubtingly; "and so I will go now and finish my letter to Melville, that it may be in time for you to enclose to him, before you set off for the Vale."



The Vale! Donaghue started.

“For to suppose the day could keep you from it, would be idle, I am sure; and as to your headach——”

“Don’t delay any longer,” cried Donaghue, “about your letter,” unable to endure the agony of speaking about the Vale.

Lavinia kissed her hand, and vanished, but with a doubt, a misgiving on her mind, as to his not having been sincere with her in this instance, that, on reaching her apartment, made her communicate her apprehensions to Mrs. Cormick, whom she found there, of something having happened to disturb him.

The nurse, taking the alarm, instantly hastened in quest of the corporal, to inquire whether he knew of any thing that was the matter.

Cormick, whose mind had been misgiving him ever since his conversation with Mrs. Featherston, startled at the question, inquired what had occasioned it; and on learning, became instantly convinced

that something disagreeable had occurred, more especially as he was confident he had heard sir William speaking in an exalted tone, and had remarked it as an extraordinary thing, his not being attended to his carriage by his master.

Full of dismay, but without imparting what he thought to his mother, lest it should be a means of creating alarm in the mind of Lavinia, he forthwith proceeded to the apartment where his master was, and whom he found walking about it in such agitation as instantly confirmed his worst fears. So utterly lost was Donaghue at the moment, in the contemplation of the predicament in which he found himself, that he did not perceive that any one had entered, till Cormick, after various devices to try and draw his attention, threw down a large book, the noise of which startling, made him cast his eyes on him, and angrily demand what had brought him there?

“ I—I came,” said Cormick, appearing

to be fidgeting about the reading-table, "to—to settle the things."

"What! at this hour? Begone! nor intrude again till I ring for you."

"Yes, your honour; but I suppose your honour won't be for riding to the Vale to-day, but going in the carriage, it continues to rain so. At what hour shall I order it?"

Donaghue looked with almost fierceness at him for a moment, and then turned away.

"I say, your honour, at what hour?"

"Leave me!" cried Donaghue, in such a tone as perhaps he had never before addressed him in; "leave me, nor, at your peril, I command, approach again without being called."

"Well, I am going," but he still continued loitering at the table, but as if only to put every thing into disorder there, throwing down the books at one side, and as fast as he picked them up there, tumbling them down at another.

"Do you know what you are about?"

demanded Donaghue, hardly able any longer to control himself, for this was not a moment, the moment of sore vexation, for trifling or intrusion. -

“Troth, hardly, I believe,” was the reply.

“Cormick,” said Donaghue, with forced calmness, “don’t give me cause for regret; for you know how it would pain me to say or do any thing to hurt your feelings. Leave me, my good fellow; and when I want you, I will ring for you; but now——” Intolerable agony choked his utterance, and striking his forehead with his hand, he turned to a window. “Leave me,” he repeated, after a transient pause, “again I order—I command!”

“No, I can’t,” cried Cormick.

“How!” exclaimed Donaghue, turning fiercely on him.

“No; you may look and do as you please,” said Cormick, coolly; “but I can’t, nor I won’t leave you, for you are not fit to be left by yourself—don’t I see distraction in every look? But no wonder, for

I guess how it is; my mind has been mis-giving me ever since I was talking with that witch, and she told me some one was blabbing. I thought there was mischief brewing then, and so I am not surprised at what has happened now."

"That witch!—whom do you allude to? or what is it you mean by these broken hints and sentences?"

"Why, that painted Jezabel—she that thought I was in love with her, though, God knows, I had as much thoughts of her, or the likes of her (for I soon saw what she was), as of one of my ould great great grandmothers, that's dead a hundred years, or more for aught I know—Mrs. Featherston, lady Jane's woman."

"Ha! what of her?" exclaimed Donaghue, starting, as a sudden light seemed to flash across his mind; "what of her?" in extreme emotion he demanded.

Cormick, without hesitation, proceeded to inform him of his last meeting with Mrs. Featherston, and what she had men-

tioned to him, or rather indeed the whole of the conversation that had passed between them—a conversation that he now deeply regretted, from an internal conviction that it was framed for the artful purpose of trying to obtain some further information through his means.

Donaghue hardly heard him to a conclusion, ere, with a wild laugh—"Oh, I now see how it is!" he cried; "I now see all! the hand from which the poisoned arrow has been discharged that is rankling in my heart! That woman, of course, was set on by her mistress, to draw you into some confession, that might enable her to know how to act against me; for whatever might be the knowledge she had contrived to obtain, of what there were so many reasons for wishing to conceal, it is evident she knew not all she desired, till she learned it through you. Her woman's affecting to be perfectly informed on the subject, was all a stratagem, to betray you into the disclosure that was required; and lady Jane has barbarously taken advantage



of the peculiarity of my situation to destroy me; for well, well she knew, at the expence of my friend's happiness, I would not, could not, attempt a vindication of myself.—Devil! devil!" he cried, through his clenched teeth, as he paced the hall, with feelings that shook his very frame.

"Devil!" cried Cormick; "you may well call her that, and the other one too; mistress and maid, they are both alike. Oh, then, how I wish I'd known, the other evening, what my lady was about, when she came over me so nately, with her smooth English tongue! But there's no coming up to these women for guile and deceit; 'tis my belief, if he who tempted the first of them was to come amongst them now, he'd be no match for them; and, to be sure, there wouldn't be half the disturbance there is in the world, if it wasn't for them; as I was reading in an old play-book the other evening, who was it but a woman caused the long ten years siege of Troy?—who

was it but a woman made Marc Antony lose the world?—who was it, in short, that has been the occasion of all the mischief that ever was heard of, but a woman?—and who, to finish all, was it sold us all, but a woman?”

“But if there are devils amongst the sex, so are there angels!” cried Donaghue; “and was I not assured of one of the brightest and loveliest of these——But I have lost her!” staggering back to a seat through agony; “I have lost her through the machinations of that vilest of women! It is useless, Cormick, to try and conceal it from you—it must soon be every where known—lady Jane has ruined and undone me with sir William,” and he proceeded to acquaint the agitated Cormick with the particulars of all that had recently occurred.

Cormick wrung his hands, in downright agony.—“Oh, to think of this!” he cried; “when we were all so happy and comfortable, after squire Dennis keeping his word of being the making of some one

belonging to the family; for, to be sure, it was all along of him that your honour got back your fortune. But it mayn't be so bad as your honour thinks. Mr. Melville must now be coming back soon, and then——”

Donaghue again started up, and began traversing the hall. No, no, there was no hope of that. The letter received from him, only that morning, mentioned his uncle being still in such a state as to render it impossible for him to leave him: but something must be done—he could not rest under the idea of being thought capable of offering so gross an insult to his Eveleen, to his own sweet bride, as he was now accused of. He would write to sir William; he would simply state the fact to him, and rely on him, both as a man of sense and sensibility, to forgive what friendship had occasioned; and surely it was impossible but that he must forgive what was both so natural and excusable.

The fever of his mind seemed in a mo-

ment to abate, at the hope suggested by this determination, and hastily placing himself at the table, he was in the very act of commencing his letter, when the reflection of all that was likely to accrue from it, made him suddenly check his hand. In acknowledging Lavinia was under his protection, should he not be betraying her again into the power of her guardian? That she would be forced away, the moment it was known where she was, he could not doubt; and how, how, after thus appearing voluntarily to give her up, could he ever face Melville again?—"No, no, it cannot be," he exclaimed, starting up, and dashing away the pen in despair; "I cannot, at the expence of my friend's happiness, purchase my own.—But, Melville, my dear, dear friend, in what a predicament have you placed me—but, be-tide what will, I swear to be faithful to the confidence you have reposed in me!"

But though this suddenly-conceived plan was obliged to be relinquished, was there no other to be thought of that might

answer in its stead? Could he but obtain an interview with Eveleen, he would at once confide to her what he had intended to disclose to her father, convinced that her sentiments, with regard to his conduct about Melville, would indeed be very different from his on the subject, and consequently, however the intercourse between them might be interrupted, or suspended, till it was safe to come to an open explanation, his interests with her would suffer no injury. But how was this to be managed or accomplished, persuaded, as he was, that every precaution would now be taken, both by herself, offended as she must be, by the conduct imputed to him, as well as her father, to prevent any thing of the kind? In short, it appeared next to impracticable to have it obtained; and accordingly he decided on writing; but no sooner had he done so, than an equal difficulty appeared about the conveyance of a letter—how or by what means to accomplish getting one delivered to her. At length he recollected something like a



hint he had received from Cormick's mother, of an attachment between him and Miss Erin's maid; and no sooner had it recurred to him, than he explained to Cormick what he wished to have effected through his means.

Cormick looked very blank and confused while listening to him, and at length confessed he feared having offended his mistress irreconcilably, by the flirtation into which he had unfortunately been drawn with her rival, Mrs. Featherston; but whatever could be done, should be done; and Donaghue, without further loss of time, sat down to write his letter, which, the moment it was finished, Cormick went off with.



CHAPTER IV.  
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“ Oh, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o’er me !”

IN the mean time sir William had returned home; the moment he alighted, he repaired to lady Erin’s dressing-room, where he understood she and Eveleen were then sitting by themselves, anxious to get through the unpleasant communication he had to make as soon as possible, aware that the longer a disagreeable business is delayed, the more unwilling we are to set about it.

“ So you have been out, my dear ?” said lady Erin, as he entered. “ I had no idea of your going out such a day as this.”

“ Nor I, but something occurred to oblige me.”

His tone was not his usual one; and

both her ladyship and Eveleen, alike struck by it, raised their eyes from their work to look at him, and in the discomposure of his looks clearly saw that something had happened to disturb him.

“ I hope, my dear,” said lady Erin, “ you have heard nothing additionally distressing about our poor friend in Dublin ?”

“ No, nothing. ’Tis not about him I am exactly thinking at the moment, with all my regard for him ; it is about something that more intimately—more immediately concerns me, than what has happened to distress him. I have been to Altoir-na-Grenie ; an unpleasant letter brought me there—I had hoped to have had it contradicted ; but in the hope I was disappointed, and—and—the result is, that there is an end of all farther intercourse with O’Brien. There is the letter,” he added, unfolding and laying it on the table before his thunderstruck wife and daughter ; “ when you glance over it, you’ll hardly wonder, I believe, at what

it has led to.—Well?” he exclaimed, after he had allowed them time for its perusal.

“ Well, I am indeed shocked, shocked beyond language to express !” said lady Erin ; “ a short time ago, and I could not have believed this possible !”

“ Then you do not blame me for what I have done,” said sir William, “ for having entirely broken off with him ?—And you, my dear girl,” turning his anxious looks upon his daughter, “ you neither, I hope ?”

Eveleen tried to reply, but the effort was beyond her strength—the indistinct words died away upon her pale lips, and with a deep sigh her head fell upon the shoulder of her mother.

Her father lifted her up, and bore her to a window, but some time elapsed ere either the air or the united efforts of her distressed parents succeeded in restoring her, so cruel, so terrible was the shock she had sustained.

“ My God !” exclaimed sir William, the fondest of fathers, as she lay reclined on his breast, “ is not this a sight suffi-

cient to excuse me for uttering execrations against that young libertine?"

"No, no," cried lady Erin, as her trembling hands continued chafing the temples of her daughter, "let us still, in the midst of resentment, remember Christian charity, and pray for the reformation of him who has indeed wrung our hearts with sorrow. Cost us what pangs he may, I never can forget his being the son of my dearest friend. Good God, how does the experience of each succeeding day tend still more powerfully to prove what shortsighted mortals we are! Since this reverse in his fortune, how often have I dared to regret, and thus indirectly murmur, at her removal hence, when I now see that she was only taken away from the evil to come! for had she been spared to witness it, what an hour of bitterness would this have been to her—to see the son of her fond affections lost, banished, cast off, by the friends whose esteem she was so anxious to obtain him, as an object of contempt and reprobation! Un-

fortunate young man ! what a proof of the responsibility of parents about their offspring ! for this terrible dereliction may, I conclude, be imputed to the example early set by his poor, thoughtless, imprudent father. How justly has it been said, that prosperity is the test of virtue ! How well, how correctly, how even nobly, may it not be said, did this unhappy young man conduct himself through the season of adversity, but the moment it changed, how has he lost himself !”

On Eveleen's entirely coming to herself, she almost feared encountering the glances of her father, lest she should read in them censure or reproach for the weakness she had betrayed ; but his tender caresses, and endearing expressions, soon dissipated this fear. He might appear stern, and he was stern to vice and folly ; but he knew, and he felt what a young and bereaved heart must endure under the first shock of disappointed affection, and he could not crush the broken reed.—“ I know, my dearest girl,” he cried, “ what

you must feel from the shock you have experienced, since the rudest shock the human heart can experience, is that which is inflicted by the discovery of perfidy in the object of its regard; but while I am aware of this, I am equally so that proper exertions will be made for overcoming it; and these are what we never fail in. To give up a beloved object is, I know, a bitter pang—one that needs our utmost strength of mind to enable us to endure; but still, is it to be compared to the living in a state of constant distrust and anxiety with them? But I will not detain you longer. I see it will be a relief to you to be by yourself a little; but ere you retire, give me the satisfaction of saying that you do not secretly reproach me for what I have done.”

“Reproach!” repeated Eveleen, emphatically, and raising her eyes, from which, overpowered by the tenderness of her father, tears were now pouring in torrents; “oh no! could I be capable of reproach of the kind, of even a murmur, in

what a light should I regard myself! No, my dear sir, you have acted just as I would myself have acted, if left to my own free unbiassed judgment; for to have passed over, to have forgiven——” Her lip quivered—she kissed her father’s hand—pressed her lips for an instant to her mother’s cheek, tear-dewed like her own, and hastily withdrew to her chamber.

“There,” said her father, looking after her with mingled pride and affection, “there spoke the consistent principles and feelings I ever expected to find her possessed of, when put to the test—sensitivity to feel, but firmness to resist, what must now be considered a weakness and an offence to virtue. What a treasure, for any one capable of appreciating her worth! and how should we bless the superintending Providence that has prevented her being thrown away! That wretched young man—I could almost find it in my heart to pity him; for what has he not lost in losing her? Yet no, the man capable of acting as he has done, with the

prospect of a union with such a woman as she is, merits nothing but contempt.

Miss Erin started on entering her dressing-room; the preparations for her marriage were by this time far advanced, and several bridal dresses, that very morning arrived from Dublin, were still lying spread out upon the chairs, on which they had been laid for her inspection; for a minute she involuntarily pressed her hands against her eyes, and a fresh gush of sorrow burst from her wounded heart—wounded, oh, how acutely! by the very hand that, but a few short minutes ago, she had fondly, credulously, as it now seemed, imagined would sooner have planted a dagger in its own breast, than allowed evil or injury to have approached her! and was it, could it be, that, with his acuteness of feeling, his susceptibility to shame and censure, the regard which even hereditary pride made him feel for the good opinion of the world, Donaghue had so entirely forgot, so utterly lost himself, as to render his home, the very home he was preparing

for his bride, the scene of a degrading amour? But he had not denied the gross imputation, and who then was to discredit it? And this was his love for her—this the romantic constancy for which she gave him credit—this his respect for reputation—this his deference for truth and virtue! Good God! who, to know him, who, to converse with him, as she had done, could ever have believed him such a dissembler? And yet, did she actually believe him one? was there not something in his manner so unstudied, an energy, an ardour, an animation that, as recalled to recollection, checked the idea of his being insincere, either in what he had looked, or what he had professed? But her giving him credit, as, despite of herself she was tempted to do, for sincerity, both in what he avowed and professed, by no means operated to his advantage, but the very contrary; for if, with a heart occupied by such an attachment as he professed for her, such a respect for virtue, and the esteem of the world, he still had, not power to resist

temptation, or curb his lawless passions, what reliance was to be placed, or what confidence reposed in him? and as the thought occurred, how did she bless the interposition that had prevented her leading that life of hardly endurable misery that is led by those “who doat, yet doubt—suspect, yet strongly love!” It was not in his power now to make her feel the pangs of jealousy, the tortures of alternate hope and fear, of reviving confidence and renewed suspicion; but as his wife—“Oh, good God!” she exclaimed, clasping her hands, “when this day commenced, would I have believed any one, Donaghue, that should have told me, long ere its close, I should rejoice at all prospect of ever becoming your wife being over? Unhappy man, if indeed your affection for me be what you have persuaded me, what misery have you not drawn on yourself! from the trance of pleasure, on what a desert scene must your eyes open! for hope extinguished, what but a desert scene is the world, with all its allurements, to the

afflicted heart? If it be, as something within me tells me it is, may the lesson you have now received prove a salutary one to you, and teach you not to trifle again with your happiness!"

The uninterrupted indulgence she was permitted to give to her feelings, enabled her sooner to recover herself than might otherwise have been the case; for sorrow must have utterance ere it knows relief.

At the usual hour of assembling in the drawing-room, preparatory to dinner, she joined the party there; and the fond approving smiles of her father and mother were a reward for her exertions to subdue her feelings. But her firmness was again put to the test, by the inquiries that, on the announcement of dinner, were made after Donaghue; and still more, when, on entering the dining-room, she found, as usual, a chair placed for him.

Her father's eye was upon her—he saw her change colour, and—"Take that away," he said to a servant, glancing at the chair.

"So you don't expect Mr. O'Brien then

to-day?" said sir Edward. "I hope it's not the rain that is keeping him away; for, upon my life, if it is, if I were you, Miss Erin, I should be vastly offended."

"No, it is not the rain," said sir William; "the day being fine or wet would have made no difference, with regard to his dining here. I did not expect him to-day; nor do I expect him shortly again here."

A general stare was the consequence of this observation; and some inquiries were about being hazarded, but which sir William checked, and a turn was quickly given to the conversation.

But the evening was a wretched one to Eveleen; so still more acute became every moment the intense anguish she was enduring, that it seemed to her as if the shock she had sustained had at first a stunning effect upon her senses; she still, however, tried to struggle with her feelings, but with every nerve throbbing with anguish, every idea wandering, to smile and seem to converse as usual became at

length too painful an effort to persevere in ; and her mother, anxiously watching every look, suggested her withdrawing at an early hour to her chamber.

In the mean while, Cormick had been exerting all his influence to try and effect a reconciliation with his offended mistress ; imputing, as she did, all his efforts for this to his not having her rival now to flirt with, with the greatest difficulty he effected an interview with her ; but nothing could have induced her to comply with any other request, than the one he had to make ; but what her mistress was concerned in, she could not bring herself to refuse, and accordingly undertook putting the letter in her way, not having courage to deliver it directly into her hand.

The ensuing day was fine ; happy would Eveleen and Donaghue have considered themselves, had the mental storm of the preceding one been succeeded by such a calm as had succeeded the storm that had rendered it so unpleasant ; but there was no assuagement of their anguish or per-

turbation; they were disunited—they were separated—and how many days must elapse, ere that idea could cease to agonize and agitate!

Sir William's anxiety was so great about his daughter, as to induce him, under the pretext furnished him by the fineness of the morning, of inviting her to a walk before breakfast, to seek her, at an early hour, in her dressing-room; he found her there, and though she expressed herself pleased at what he proposed, he thought there was something of embarrassment in her look. Nor was he mistaken; tears had again been flowing; and a fear of their, at length, degrading her in his eyes, made her indeed feel embarrassed at so unexpectedly seeing him.

As sir William was walking about the room, while she was tying on her bonnet, near the chair from which she had taken it, a letter on her dressing-table caught his eye; involuntarily he glanced at the direction, and perceived it was in the handwriting of Donaghue. A strong feeling

of indignation instantly pervaded his mind; the embarrassment her manner had evinced was now accounted for; she had been perusing this letter, and it was the narrow escape she had from being surprised reading what, she was conscious, she should have thrown from her with contempt, that had given her the appearance of confusion he had remarked on his entrance. His cheek flushed, and pointing to the letter—"I am sorry to find this here," he cried, "since it has, I will confess, disappointed the hope I entertained of your firmness—your——"

Eveleen regarded him for a moment with surprise, then hastily advancing to the table, and perceiving what it was he alluded to, she eagerly caught up the letter, and turning the other side to him, shewed him the seal unbroken.

"Forgive me," said her father, "I need pardon for having allowed myself for a moment to doubt—to suspect, that you would act otherwise than I expected."

"Do not pain me, my dear father,"

said Eveleen, "by speaking in this manner: you had a right to think what you did, from what you saw; but as the seal must prove I know not the contents of that letter, so equally, I assure you, I was ignorant of there being such a one there."

"I think we can be at no loss to surmise who placed it there," said sir William; "but there must be a stop put to this; I will allow of no tampering with any one belonging to me, nor intrusion or agitation to your feelings through these means," and as he spoke he rang the bell with some violence.

Kate, of course, answered it. He had prepared himself for her entrance by taking up the letter, and the instant she entered, and saw it in his hand, her looks convicted her of being the guilty person.—"I see," he cried, regarding her with sternness, "there is no occasion to accuse you—your looks have done that. That you were conscious of committing an impropriety, in taking charge of this letter, your not presuming to deliver it openly

into the hand of your mistress is a proof. A person who wilfully does what is wrong, I do not think fit for my service; you will prepare yourself, therefore, immediately to quit it."

Kate turned pale, and trembled, and cast an imploring look at her mistress.

"No," replied Miss Erin, "I cannot, after such conduct, intercede for you."

Sir William allowed himself to appear, for some minutes, as if he was not to be moved; then again addressing the culprit—"On this one condition," he said, "as I rather conceive it will please your mistress to be allowed to retain you, I consent to pardon your offence, that you do not suffer yourself to be ever tempted to repeat it; should you do so, or should I discover that you hold any intercourse whatever with any one belonging to Altoir-na-Grenie, from that moment make up your mind to being not only dismissed from my service, but for ever thrown off by my family."

Kate fell on her knees, to thank him for his goodness in forgiving her, and to make the promise he required. She knew she was doing wrong, she confessed, in taking charge of the letter; but what could she do? she demanded—what could she do, when the person she took it from went on his knees to make her take it, and said it might be the death of his master if she refused?

This incident did not tend to recompose the mind of Eveleen. Donaghue then was suffering what she conceived; and, spite of resentment, she could not help commiserating his imagined wretchedness.

Cormick, at an early hour, was hovering about the Vale, to learn what had resulted from the letter. A length of time elapsed ere he succeeded in learning anything on the subject; at length, through the medium of one of the men, Kate contrived to have a message conveyed to him, acquainting him with what had occurred, and her positive determination, in conse-

quence, of having no further communication with him.

In utter disconsolation Cormick took the way homewards, almost feeling as if he wanted courage to face his master with such tidings as he had to communicate. The pain, however, of actually being the person to inflict pain on him was spared, by the letter being returned ere he got back, enclosed in a blank cover, directed by sir William, together with a parcel containing some costly presents, which had lately been presented to Eveleen, and some notes addressed to her, for, with the fond artifice of love, to have something to feast on when absent from her, Donaghue had, from time to time, made pretexts for writing *billets* to her, requiring answers.

Foiled in the stratagem about the letter, he could think of no other plan than now trying to see her himself; but how was this to be accomplished, he again demanded, guarded as she would be both by her own caution and her father's?

he cared not, he had got desperate, and attempt it, at all hazards, he was determined he would.

Eveleen, apprehensive of some rashness—some madness of the kind, kept herself almost a close prisoner, restricting herself from her accustomed walks and rambles, except accompanied; though, to have now indulged herself in them alone would have been a luxury; but every nerve shook with agitation, at the bare idea of encountering him again, till time, at least, should have subdued the regrets that each now felt, at the abrupt termination of every thing between them—the unexpected dissolution of an attachment so nearly on the point of being cemented indissolubly. In vain she reflected on his conduct—nothing could divest her of the idea of his affection for her being ardent and sincere, nor could all the resentment inspired by that conduct prevent a pang of anguish, whenever the thought occurred, of what, in consequence, he must be now feeling—his despair—his desolation. She had her

dearest connexions—her nearest friends about her, to sooth—to support—to bear her up under the trial; but he, unfortunate—he, at this moment, of dire and conflicting feelings, had not a being to speak peace to his distracted soul—to argue with—to calm or console him. But though her heart even melted, at moments, with pity for him—though many of the tears that now often, unconsciously, dropped from her bright eyes were caused by the affecting picture which her imagination drew of his distress, a wish for a reconciliation never once occurred; on the contrary, though even her own unshackled mistress, nothing she felt could induce her ever to renew those ties that had existed between them, since, after what had occurred, it was impossible her confidence in him could ever be restored; yet long, long, she feared, her memory would linger over his many amiable qualities—linger over them with fond and deep regret, that they had not been accompanied by greater firmness and consistency.

At length, his patience utterly exhausted, Donaghue, after having vainly watched and lain in wait for her some days about her well-known haunts, ventured one evening to approach the house at dusk. After reconnoitring in every direction, he entered the conservatory, which terminated one wing of the building, knowing it was a place Eveleen was sometimes fond of walking or sitting in at this hour, listening to the buzz of voices in the apartments it communicated with, or, perhaps, the sound of music. The extreme length of the place prevented his being able to ascertain whether there was any one in it till he had advanced some way into it, when he clearly perceived a female, in white, sitting in a pensive attitude, with her back towards him. It was Eveleen—Eveleen herself, he instantly felt convinced, and all sight of caution lost in the overpowering transports of his soul at again finding himself in her presence, he rushed forward, and ere she had power to

make an effort for escaping, was at her feet, embracing her knees.

So secure had she thought herself where she was, that the surprise of seeing him operated, for a moment, like a shock upon her feelings.—“ Good God !” she then exclaimed, endeavouring to force herself from his grasp, “ how, after what has passed, could you venture to appear here ? how have the cruelty——”

“ Do not talk to me of cruelty,” said Donaghue, impatiently interrupting her, “ it is I only who have a right to speak—to complain of it—I, who have been so scorned—so defamed—so driven to the very verge of despair and madness ; but this precious—this blessed moment compensates for all !” he exclaimed, pressing her hands, with the almost convulsive grasp of passion, to his lips and breast.

Worked up to the highest pitch of indignation by this conduct—conduct so presumptuous, after what had occurred—“ Leave me ! unhand me !” said Eveleen, “ or you will provoke me to a measure I

could, on many accounts, wish to avoid. You have intruded on me, under the idea of my being passive under the intrusion, but you are mistaken. I need but a very slight exertion of my voice to make myself heard, you must be aware, in the adjoining apartments—do not drive me to such an expedient to compel you to retire.”

“Cruel, unkind Eveleen! you have then united with your barbarous father in condemning me unheard.”

“Unheard!” she repeated, with scorn, while she felt her blood mounting tumultuously to her cheeks; “did he not generously leave to yourself—but I disdain myself, for being betrayed into any thing like an argument with you! Release me, sir, I insist! I will not be detained! it can answer no other purpose than to occasion additional indignation. You may regret—you may repent—I dare say I should be accused of weakness for believing it very probable that you do; but neither sorrow nor repentance can restore lost confidence; and no earthly consideration could induce

me to give my hand to a man, on whose principles and steadiness I could not place reliance."

"And can you think that, if I were the degraded being you have been led to imagine, I could ever voluntarily have sought to meet your eyes again? no, by those delightful hopes, which this propitious moment has revived! your own anxiety to shun me would not have been greater than would mine to have avoided you: but I seem to forget the purpose for which I have come; for a moment consent to listen to me calmly."

"No, no!" exclaimed Eveleen, in an absolute agony of terror, "there is my father's voice approaching! leave me! leave me, if you do not wish to see me expire with terror!"

"For an instant—only for an instant, hearken to me," said Donaghue, striving to retain her struggling hands—"one word almost will suffice."

"Oh, Heavens, what cruel persistence!"

cried the still more terribly agitated Eveleen. "Good God! how can you see me in this state of agony, and not relieve me from it?"

"Tell me then," said Donaghue, who now really distinguished the voice of sir William, "where—how I can see you to-morrow, if, indeed, it be impossible to steal one minute for me to-night?"

"Detain me another minute," said Miss Erin, "and I never can forgive you. You see the agitation I am in, and yet you unfeelingly disregard it."

"There then," said Donaghue, in a proud, resentful tone, letting go her hand; "but remember, Eveleen, if your heart retains the slightest interest for me, you may yet feel a pang at the recollection of this moment."

But Eveleen appeared not to hear him; she sprang forward, apparently intent only on preventing the approach of her father, lest he should not retire with sufficient quickness to hinder himself from being seen. This was the case indeed. She

knew sir William's deep resentment of his conduct, and she trembled, therefore, to think of what might be the result of the discovery of his having obtruded on her, such was the indignation she was well aware it would occasion.

To relieve herself from this tormenting dread, she thought of writing to Donaghue, to solicit, as an obligation, his not attempting any thing of the kind again; but the advantage that might be taken of the circumstance, or rather the interpretation to which it was liable, prevented her; and all she could finally decide on was, keeping a stricter guard over herself than before, and avoiding every place to which there was a possibility of his obtaining admission.

Hardly had Donaghue left the conservatory, ere he felt enraged with himself for having allowed himself to be induced, by the impulse of offended pride, to release her, ere he had forced her to hearken to him; yet, from the terrible state of agitation she was in, but very little benefit,

after all, would have accrued to him from the circumstance, he was inclined to believe. Well, what was now to be done? writing was out of the question; and put completely on her guard, as she now was, there was very little chance of obtaining another opportunity of conversing with her. Something, however, must be thought of, for he saw her irritation was deep against him; and there was no knowing to what resentment like her's might lead—the resentment of wounded affection and exasperated pride; and at length, as the only method he could think of for accomplishing what he wished, he decided on making it appear that he had quitted the neighbourhood.

This plan was immediately carried into effect, and so well managed, that not a doubt was entertained at the Vale of his positive departure from the castle; it seemed indeed, to Eveleen, the natural result of the repulse he had met with from her.

Well, he had resigned her; there was

now, indeed, a final conclusion to the affair between them; but was she not aware of this before? and why then did her heart feel such a pang at the first intimation of his departure? But the weakness was but a transient one; she quickly recovered, or rather recollected herself sufficiently to rejoice that he was gone, relieving her, as did the circumstance, from the necessity of imposing a very painful restraint any longer on herself, as well as from the apprehensions she must have continued to be agitated by, while he remained in the neighbourhood, of some *mal à propos* meeting between him and her father.

But to profit by having so far thrown her off her guard; as to induce her to walk out again by herself, it was requisite for Donaghue to adopt some disguise, lest a premature discovery of the imposition he had practised should cause the complete frustration of his aim; and, with the assistance of Cormick, this was done. There were some new embellishments making about the grotto; the person chiefly em-

ployed in them was a young man of Cormick's acquaintance, and matters were so managed, that Donaghue personated him, without any apprehension of being surprised by any of the other men employed in the grounds. But for a whole day he kept watch, without even catching a glimpse of Eveleen. Early on the second, however, he saw her coming towards the grotto by herself. His heart throbbed, and his very hands trembled with emotion; but it was requisite he should restrain himself till she had entered the grotto; and accordingly, stooping down as she approached, he affected to be most busily employed about some shrubs that were to be removed, to allow of a new channel being made for a stream of water, so as to form a cascade. Hardly, however, had Eveleen passed him, when glancing back, she thought she saw him about taking up a shrub she wished to remain, from the picturesque effect it would have, she conceived, on the edge of the stream. —“No, no, that is not to be touched,”

she said; and she turned back to see what further directions she might like to give. "Do you understand me?" she said, looking at the supposed labourer, to shew him particularly what she meant—"these things are to remain where they are;" but she could not even catch his eyes, he still continued busily employed, as if he had neither heard or seen her.

"I say, my friend," cried Eveleen, a little surprised, "do you comprehend me? or will you suspend your work for a minute, that you may be enabled to do so?"

Further evasion the fictitious workman saw was useless; he dropped the spade, and ere Eveleen could well believe her astonished senses, she found herself clasped to his bosom; but terror and indignation soon enabled her to free herself from him, but her retreat was completely intercepted.—"This is intolerable!" she exclaimed; "this cruel persecution—it is unmanly—ungenerous—to persevere in what you are aware occasions me such agitation!—to

have recourse too, to the meanness of deception, and of such a disguise!"

"Do not upbraid me," said Donaghue, with perhaps a slight sensation of indignation, himself, at the moment, "for what you yourself have occasioned; it is you, that, by your cruel obstinacy, in refusing to grant me a moment's conversation——"

"For what should I have granted it?" said Eveleen; "is it to draw upon myself the reproaches of my friends and connexions? but don't mistake me," she added, seeing the eyes of Donaghue suddenly sparkle, "their influence was not wanting, I assure you, to make me act as I have done."

"Well, I am sure," said Donaghue, half smiling, "I have no reason to advocate your feeling or humanity towards me. However, I am very much mistaken if, ere we part, I do not make that unkind bosom feel some little degree of regret and compunction for its inexorableness towards me;" and with what might well indeed be termed new-flushed hopes, he

was on the very point of commencing his explanation, when Eveleen, with a faint cry of terror, uttered the name of her father, and following the direction of her eyes, he saw him approaching with lord Altidore.

“Fly! fly!” said Eveleen, “if you have any pity for me! I tremble at the thought of your being found here! to vindicate myself, I must acknowledge the truth, and what may not the indignation of my father be, at finding me thus persecuted by you! why—why,” impatiently she added, perceiving he hesitated, “do you delay? Oh, if not for my sake, at least for your own, do not let yourself be surprised here in that degrading disguise!”

“Cruel, unfeeling Eveleen!” exclaimed Donaghue, in a tone of passionate resentment, “to again reproach me for what you have yourself occasioned.” But there was no time for more; sir William and lord Altidore were now close at hand, and he could not bear, indeed, that they should see him lessened to the necessity of dis-

guise and artifice. A glance of involuntary reproach escaped him; and turning away with quickness, he was soon out of sight. But in what a state of emotion did he return home! foiled in every effort to come to an explanation with Eveleen, he began to believe he was indeed fated to lose her, and need we say there was almost distraction in the thought.

Though there was an end, or, at least, a suspension of all further intercourse between Cormick and his mistress, he yet found means of learning every thing that was going on at the Vale, and it was accordingly ascertained that lord Altidore now visited there even more constantly than before—that let her be denied to who she would, Miss Erin was never denied to him; and that, in short, there were quite sufficient grounds to justify the report, that now again began to be revived in the neighbourhood, of the renewal of his addresses in that quarter; and Donaghue, giving way to the apprehensions suggested by what he heard, no longer hesitated

to write to Melville, on the subject of his coming back, but without venturing to exactly explain the cause of his heightened anxiety for it, lest it should be the means of leading to some abrupt disclosure to his uncle, that might irreparably injure him.

All this time Lavinia remained in utter ignorance of the general distress and disturbance she had been the means of occasioning, Donaghue having given it in strict command that she should not be acquainted with any thing that could agitate her; nor did she want any thing additional to add to her uneasiness, so awkward did she feel her situation, and so unhappy was she, at the thought of what the Wheatleys must be suffering on her account, and the injury which her conduct might, perhaps, do Mr. Wheatley with her guardian.

The state of agitation in which sir William found his daughter, on joining her near the grotto, united to the sudden disappearance of the man he had seen her

speaking with on his approach, excited a suspicion in his mind, that induced him to question her on the subject of what he had observed, the moment he had an opportunity for the purpose. That it was Donaghue himself he had seen in the disguise of a labourer, he had not the slightest conception, but that it was some one belonging to him, employed to deliver a letter or message to her, he had hardly a doubt, from the state in which he found her. Eveleen having stipulated that he should not resent what she told him, acknowledged the truth; and on his further inquiring, related what had occurred in the conservatory.

Sir William was greatly vexed by what he heard. He saw that she had not nerves to bear the kind of shock which these surprises and intrusions occasioned her; and yet how were they to be prevented? argument or remonstrance would have very little effect, he feared, with a young man rendered desperate by the loss of a beloved mistress; for, from all that had occurred,

he could not help being led to believe, like Eveleen herself, that however Donaghue might have dissembled in other instances, he certainly had not dissembled with respect to the passion he had professed for her, since, what but genuine regard, situated as he now was, with regard to worldly matters, could render him thus miserable for a reconciliation?

At last, the only plan he could devise for the purpose, was her quitting the Vale for a few weeks, till either Donaghue should have left the castle, which they concluded was now his intention, or else should be convinced of the uselessness of any longer persecuting her.

Neither she nor her mother made any objection to the project ; on the contrary, both conceived nothing could be more advisable ; and all that remained to be considered was, the place she should go to. Sir William at first thought of taking her to her uncle's, but when he came to reflect on the giddy imprudent disposition of Mrs. Erin, he relinquished this idea ; and at last it was settled with lord Altidore,

who was now high in the confidence of all the family, and on the eve, indeed, of being rendered happy through Eveleen's means, that his aunt, a very amiable and pleasant old lady, residing about seventeen miles from the Vale, should be prepared to receive her ; it was also settled, that neither when, nor where she was going should be made known, lest of any intimation reaching the ears of Donaghue, that might occasion him to set a watch to discover, and that the journey should be taken in a hired carriage, without the attendance of any of their own servants.

But all these precautions were rendered unavailing, through the secret intelligence Cormick contrived to obtain for his master. His friend was the person employed to engage the chaise which was to convey Eveleen, under the protection of her father, from the Vale ; and due notice being given of the circumstance, Donaghue, at a proper hour, was on the watch, prepared to follow the carriage, full of hope that he should find her leaving the Vale a favourable circumstance for him, since the agi-

tation of spirits into which she was thrown, by encountering him there, on account of her father, could hardly be the case elsewhere, as sir William, he understood, was expected back immediately after leaving her wherever she was going.

Muffled up, or rather disguised in a horseman's great-coat, for which a misty day luckily furnished a pretext, Donaghue slowly followed the chaise on horseback, not without a feeling, every now and then, of disquietude for the safety of those within, so wretched was the vehicle, so miserable the animals that were harnessed to it, and so terrible the road it had to pass over. Nothing that could be called a road could possibly be worse, indeed, rent and torn as it was, in every direction, and every here and there shelving down the sides of the frightful mountains it lay over.

Sir William, who had never traversed it before, was a good deal disconcerted when he found what kind of one it was; however, hoping every moment it would improve—worse it could not possibly get

—a hope in which he was encouraged by the drivers, he allowed himself to proceed in it, rather than turn about and take a much better one certainly, but an infinitely more circuitous one, to the old lady's habitation.

At length, his patience completely exhausted, he was on the very point of ordering the postilions to face about, when a sudden jerk overturned the crazy vehicle, within a yard or two of a horrible precipice—so close, indeed, to it, that a cry of horror escaped from Donaghue, as he saw it overturning. In a moment he was off his horse, and had extricated himself from the cumbrous coat. Sir William and Eveleen were quickly extricated by him from their perilous situation, apparently uninjured; but no sooner had the latter cast her eyes on the frightful abyss, down which they had so narrowly escaped being precipitated, than her head grew dizzy, and she fainted.

Donaghue caught her in his arms. Sir William attempted to take her from them;

but, opposing the effort, Donaghue carried her to a small public-house near the spot. It was some time before she shewed any signs of returning animation; and while she remained in a state of insensibility, her father lost sight of every thing but his immediate consideration about her; but when at length she began to revive, dismissing the people who had been busied in restoring her, he again made an effort to take her from the arms of Donaghue—but again it was resisted.—“No, no!” he cried, unconscious of what he was saying, and putting out his hand, to keep back sir William—for never again might he be allowed to hold her to his heart, never again to gaze upon that countenance, so lovely, so interesting!

“You must let me take her from you,” said sir William; “her spirits will not allow of any further agitation at present;” and as he spoke he forced her from him, and conveying her into an adjoining room, committed her to the care of the woman

of the house. Then returning to Donaghue—"Since we have so unexpectedly met, Mr. O'Brien," he said, "ere we part, I must be allowed to avail myself of the opportunity it has afforded for speaking to you on a particular subject. That it is not to chance we are indebted for the service you have just rendered us, I have every reason to believe; but the feelings that might have been excited by the conviction are repressed by what has just occurred. It is not at the very moment that a man is sensible he has just escaped from the verge of death, that he can turn with indignation upon his fellow man; but I must observe, that should you continue to persevere in your present conduct, you will reduce me to the unpleasant alternative, of either living in my own house, in a state of constant distrust and suspicion, or else of quitting the neighbourhood, since it is evident, that to the treachery of some one belonging to me, you owe your knowledge of our movements; as a man of feeling, therefore, and a gentleman, I must

request and expect you to desist from what will occasion so very unpleasant a result. The uselessness too of it would, I should hope, induce you to pay attention to my request; for if you hope that any alteration can be effected, in either my daughter's sentiments or mine, you indeed delude yourself, and may very fairly be compared to him, who walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain."

"You talk of repressing your feelings, sir," said Donaghue, indignantly, "but could any utterance you could give to them wound me like this coolness—calmness, in speaking on a subject that, as you well know, rends my very soul? If I have descended to any conduct unworthy of me, have I not been driven to it?"

"As how?" asked sir William; "I was ready to listen, I avowed myself so, to any thing you could advance in your vindication; and, after this, what have you to complain of?"

Donaghue could not reply—"What in-

deed!" and he walked about the room in the most distressing agitation. But why not avail himself of this opportunity for revealing the truth? Sir William's mind seemed softened by what had happened, and a more propitious moment, therefore, might perhaps never be obtained for the explanation; but the consequence that must result from it—the inevitable certainty of Lavinia's being torn from his protection, and given up to her guardian! No, he could not so betray the happiness of his friend. Yet, to remain in this state of agonizing incertitude about lord Altdore—it was not endurable, and suddenly stepping before sir William—"One question I entreat sir William to answer," he said, "and I take my leave—Is there any truth——" He paused—emotion for a moment overpowered his utterance—"any truth in the report that again prevails about—about lord Altdore and——". He could not finish the sentence—he could not bring himself to unite their names together.

Sir William looked at him steadily for some minutes, as if considering. Then, emphatically—"There is!" he replied; "at this very moment, preparations are making for the marriage of lord Altidore."

Donaghue turned pale as death; something he attempted to say, but he knew not what; his sight failed him, and staggering back to catch at a chair for support, he would have fallen, but for sir William.

"I grieve, I grieve," said sir William, "to see this; but surely it is what you should have been prepared for! You could not have expected——"

"Nothing, nothing considerate for my feelings!" said Donaghue, disengaging his arm from sir William, and throwing himself on a chair. "But it may not be too late," he suddenly exclaimed to himself, "to prevent this destruction of my happiness! Persuasion amounting almost to compulsion, I am convinced, could alone occasion Eveleen so soon to think of another. Melville must no longer remain in ignorance of the predicament in which he

has placed me; and Lavinia once given up to him, nothing further remains to hinder me from doing myself justice." Not a minute was to be lost—he rushed from the house, and seeking his horse, was not long in reaching the castle.

Hardly had he entered it, when a letter was put into his hand by Cormick; under the idea of its being from Melville, he was eagerly tearing it open, when Cormick, laying his hand on his arm, asked him first to look at the direction.

Donaghue, with a vacant stare at him, so bewildered was his mind, turned the letter.—“Well,” he said, “what is the meaning of this? this letter is not for me—it is directed to lord Rosenellis, whoever he is.”

“You haven’t far to seek for him,” said Cormick; “that letter is for yourself. It was brought half-an-hour ago by general O’Donaghue’s servant; and he told me all about your being made a lord, through the interest of his master.”

Donaghue again cast a look at him, as

if he did not perfectly comprehend him ; then tearing open the letter, he read as follows :

“ That man is born to disappointment, the experience of each succeeding day but tends still more forcibly to convince him. Pleased with your conduct, while suffering under a reverse of fortune, I felt impatient to return home on your account. What my intentions were, it matters not to say ; suffice it, that on the perusal of the letter I found awaiting me, from you, at my agent's in London, they were changed into a determination of exerting the interest which long services had allowed me to possess, for the revival, in your person, of a title that has long lain dormant in our family. The gazette of last week announced the accomplishment of this business ; and as nothing else had detained me in London, I immediately set out for this, amusing my imagination all the way with the bridal festivities I

should just, I expected, be in time to witness. But hardly had I drawn near the end of my journey, ere I found I need not have been afraid of not being in time for these. What a tale, in short, was I destined to hear from the person I encountered! but I shall make no comment on it—sermonizing is not my forte; it induced me, however, to immediately decide on postponing my intended visit to you a little longer, as I could not suppose that any interruption to the agreeable reflections you had been procuring for yourself, could just now be agreeable. Unfortunate young man! I can no otherwise account for your conduct, than by admitting a belief that folly and indiscretion are sometimes hereditary. Like too many others in the world, when too late to retrieve it, you will probably become sensible of the happiness you have lost, through your own means. I pity you—but the man he pities, is not the man that can be esteemed by

“C. O'DONAGHUE.”

But a short time ago, and such a letter, its sneer, its sarcasm, and its irony, must have stung the heart of Donaghue; but a short time, and its announcement would have perhaps gratified him; but now both were alike disregarded. He had no time to bestow a thought on aught but the immediate situation he was in, and, unconscious of what he was about, he threw it aside, in a manner that certainly would not have had a conciliating effect upon the general, had he witnessed it, in order to write an explanatory letter to Melville, with which Cormick was to be dispatched.

Cormick rode as if for his life, neither suffering himself to pause for rest or refreshment, till he got to the end of his journey; when he found Melville just returned from a short excursion with his uncle, and in a state of great agitation, through the perusal of Donaghue's preceding letter, which he had only then received—an agitation which the letter now presented by Cormick did not by any means

tend to lessen. The former had admitted of some hesitation, but the latter put an end to any thing further of the kind; and, directly repairing to sir James, he informed him, that the sudden illness of Donaghue, now announced to him as lord Rosenellis, rendered it so absolutely indispensable his setting off, forthwith, for Altoir-na-Grenie, that he hoped he would have the goodness to excuse his leaving him for a short time.

“Assuredly,” was the reply, “were it necessary you should do so; but as I have for some time been meditating a visit to the Vale, I may as well take the opportunity of accompanying you. You look vexed, from a fear that I may not be able to travel as expeditiously as you wish—I think I shall; if not, you shall not be retarded on my account.”

This promise satisfied Melville; and the requisite orders were issued for every thing to be got ready for their immediate departure. They travelled with such expedition as to reach the Vale about the middle

of the ensuing day, sir James never once flagging by the way, or evincing any wish for stopping.

Melville had decided on not quitting the Vale, till he had fully disclosed to sir William every particular requisite to be known on Donaghue's account; but whether he should enter upon this disclosure before his uncle or not, required a little more time for deliberation. At length, anxious to be out of suspense with regard to what he had to apprehend from his displeasure, on learning that his long-cherished plan must be relinquished, he decided on the former, and accordingly, there being no one else present but the two baronets, entered upon the subject after a slight preface.

The surprise of his auditors, as he proceeded, appeared really too great for expression; from the emotion betrayed by his uncle, his own certainly was not lessened. —“ So,” said sir William, when he had concluded, “ a pretty romantic tale this is of yours indeed! And you are really that

terrible Mr. Denny Scanlen that we were all so shocked at the idea of our pretty little Hebe having thrown herself away upon! It is bad enough, to be sure," laughing, "as it is; but, since not quite so bad as at first imagined, I believe I must, from the pleasure experienced at the thought, allow myself to be prevailed on to pardon the part which your friend took in the affair."

"But, alas, sir!" said Melville, anxiously, "of what use will your pardon be, if there's any truth in the report about Miss Erin and lord Altidore?"

"Pooh! did you really give any credit to it, knowing Eveleen as you do? how could you possibly suppose that, so recently engaged to one lover, she could possibly think of attaching herself to another? I thought none but an apprehensive lover could have given credit to any thing so improbable, from her character; and, finding your friend had done so, I certainly took advantage of the circumstance to answer him evasively, trusting the error I

thus confirmed would be a means of putting an end to conduct that was productive of very painful agitation to all parties. I did not, however, say what was incorrect about lord Altidore; his lordship is really going to be married, though certainly not to my daughter. More about him, however, anon; we must bring our own story to a conclusion, ere we enter upon another person's; but I'll not delay you any longer from hastening to your friend; though I can punish, I don't like to torture. I shall expect to see you return with *him*, and should myself accompany you, but that I wish to prepare lady Erin and my daughter for seeing him here again."

"Well, sir, friendship has wings, as well as love, and on its pinions, I assure you, I shall quickly fly to him; but that I should not appear too romantically unconcerned about myself, allow me, ere I depart, to express my hope, that as I have completely committed myself to you, no advantage will be taken of the circumstance to separate Miss Audley from me."

“The young lady’s situation is really a very delicate and embarrassing one,” said sir William; “however, as I presume she will not be permitted to remain much longer in it, I pledge you my word, that I will not interfere in the business, or in any way, directly or indirectly, be accessory to doing what I see you are apprehensive of—betraying her into the power of this terrible guardian of hers.”

“And is he really a very terrible kind of being, sir?” asked Melville, a little anxiously; “Lavinia, I know, holds him in great dread. And now that we are on the topic, I should like to know whether he really has any legal tie over her?”

“I am not at liberty to satisfy you,” replied sir William; “but I make no doubt, that, in due time, you will learn all you desire.”

“And now, my good young sir,” said sir James, fancying he saw him making a movement towards the door, “that you have told your story, pray who is to intercede for you with me? You will presume,

I suppose, to deny that I have very great reason to be angry with you, since you cannot deny being acquainted with my plans for you, and therefore cannot plead ignorance of them as an excuse for letting this chit of a girl tempt you to disappoint them ! Ay, you may laugh, sir—I see you can hardly refrain from doing so, at the very unexpected manner in which I am expressing myself; but it is not because I am not raving, that I am not displeased, and you shall find——but, till I can better collect myself, I shall refrain from giving further utterance to my sentiments on your conduct ;” and rising as he spoke, he withdrew from the room.

Melville, who really, from his manner, had been at first inclined to imagine that he was not very much disconcerted, since, when so, he was seldom very collected in the expression of his displeasure, now began to fear he had been mistaken. His mind, however, was still much relieved by the explanation he had come to with him,

and, without further delay, he proceeded to his friend.

Cormick had preceded him, so that his arrival was announced ere he made his appearance.—“Actually come?” said Donaghue; then, to himself—“I shall soon know my fate.”

“Actually, your honour—that is, your honour—my lord, I mean!” replied Cormick.

Donaghue gave him an angry glance—“This is no time for trifling, Cormick,” he said; “you see I am agitated.”

“Yes, your honour—that is, my lord, again I mean; but if one never begins, how will they ever be able to accustom themselves?”

Donaghue ordered him to retire, unable to endure even observation now, agitated as he was in every nerve, from the assurance that a very few minutes would now put him out of suspense about all he hoped or feared.

At length the voice of Melville met his ear, and—“My dear fellow,” he cried, as

he rushed into the room, and caught his extended hand, “here I am, to implore forgiveness for all the pain and confusion I have been the cause of——But, heyday! nervous, I protest! Why, who would ever believe this hand had performed such gallant exploits as you stand recorded in the annals of fame for! it is really more like the trembling hand of a sensitive little being of the other sex—and, by-the-bye—but, no, I won’t even ask a question about her, till I have told you to discard your dolefuls, and set off for the Vale, where your liege lady is by this time prepared to receive your renewed vows; for, in carrying her off from you, papa, finding he was running the risk of losing her in another way, by breaking her neck, very wisely brought her back, so that no delay will attend this most happy reconciliation.”

“And you really are serious, Melville?” said lord Rosenellis, as we must now begin to call him, as he rested his hand on his shoulder.

“Serious, my dear fellow! is it on such

a subject you think I could possibly jest? No, no—‘those only jest at wounds who never felt a scar!’ and so,” laying his hand upon his heart, “you need not suspect me, I believe. But now, with your lordship’s permission—and, by-the-bye, it is quite time I should congratulate you on this new accession of dignity—I will, while you are preparing, retire to announce my return elsewhere, and prepare my sweet Lavinia——” and while speaking, he was moving towards the door; but, ere he reached it, it was thrown open, and nurse Cormick rushed in, with a countenance quite as pale and wo-begone as his who drew poor Priam’s curtain at the dead of night, to announce that Lavinia had just been carried off by Mr. Wheatley, who, in the name of her father, had come to demand her, and by representing to her, the nurse, who was the person he had called for, the serious consequences that might result from not complying with this demand immediately, had frightened her into doing so.

“Then it’s all over with me!” said Melville, turning of a deadly paleness, and throwing himself on a chair; “since the guardian is changed into a father, there is no hope of his authority being resisted.”

“Come, come, my dear fellow,” said his friend, now in his turn becoming a comforter, “I will not let you despair; you know the intimacy that subsists between sir William and this guardian, or father, or whatever he is, of Lavinia, and I think we need not doubt having all his interest at our side. The carriage will be ready in a minute, so let us not delay; and if the worst comes to the worst, why I’ll even run a risk for you again, and the deuce is in it, if, through one means or other, we do not bring all to a happy conclusion!”

What the shock sustained by Lavinia was, when she beheld Mr. Wheatley, may readily be conceived, and her augmented terror, on being apprized by him of the light in which she was henceforth to regard her guardian. A carriage was in

waiting for her at a little distance from the castle, but, without his assistance, she could not have reached it.

The moment she entered the cottage, she looked eagerly about for Mrs. Wheatley or Rosetta, but neither appeared.—“Collect yourself,” said Mr. Wheatley, understanding her looks, and making her take a seat; “you will see no one till you have first seen your father; he is——”

“Oh, not yet—not yet!” cried Lavinia, anticipating what he had been about saying—“oh, not yet—do not ask me to see him! I have not courage to do so, till I first know what kind of person—what kind of reception I am likely to meet from him; if a harsh one, I shall——”

She was interrupted by the door of the adjoining parlour gently opening; she looked eagerly towards it, and had a glimpse of a stranger. Life seemed to forsake her at the moment, she guessed it was her father she saw, and emotion overpowered her senses. When she recovered, she found some one supporting her;

she wanted courage to see who it was. The idea of the looks she expected to encounter, of the scene that awaited her, was terrific to her imagination; but she must collect herself—there was no escape from what she dreaded—and she accordingly ventured to take a peep.

What a change did her feelings instantly undergo! instead of the stern, threatening, denouncing, countenance she pictured to herself she should behold, she met one all kindness and feeling. In the sudden transport of relieved apprehension, she burst from the arms that enfolded her, and throwing herself at the feet of her father, rapturously embraced him.

Mr. Wheatley retired. We shall not dwell on the scene that ensued; suffice it, Lavinia found that she had, in her father, a parent deserving indeed of the name of one. His reasons for having her educated apart from him, and kept in ignorance of their affinity, were explained. Some tears were the result; but there is seldom any human joy without some little alloy. Ardent in

her feelings, she could refuse nothing to a parent who proved himself so different a being to what she apprehended, and who so fully satisfied her that she had long been his first earthly concern; and, in short, the conference ended with her plighting her word to him that she would never change her name, in consequence of his declaration that he knew not how he should ever be able to endure a separation from her.

She obtained permission, however, to acquaint Melville with this, and a note was accordingly dispatched to the Vale, informing him that one more interview was permitted. He received it just as he was quitting the carriage that brought him there with lord Rosenellis.—“One more interview!” he repeated, as he followed to the drawing-room; “what is to be done, my dear sir,” to sir William, in a despairing tone, “except you intercede, or my uncle could be induced——”

“His interference would certainly be of more consequence than mine,” replied

‘sir William; “but to obtain it, how are we to reconcile him to the disappointment of his own plans? but we will see what is to be done. In the mean time, do you repair to Rosehill, as you have been desired, and who knows but your uncle may be induced to give you a meeting there?”

“Well, sir,” said Melville, as he was about hastening back to the carriage from which he had just alighted, “I leave my cause in your hands, satisfied you will make every exertion to serve me.”

Lavinia received him alone. At the first glance he was inclined to flatter himself, from her appearing so much more composed than he had expected to find her, that there was some revocation of the cruel sentence she had informed him of; but on his fearfully inquiring whether there was any thing to hope, she shook her head.

“And can nothing move this cruel, this obdurate father of yours?” said Melville.

“You must not speak of him in such terms,” said Lavinia; “you know not how

very much the reverse of cruel or unkind he has proved himself to be."

"What! when he has decided on our separation—when he has decided on giving you to another, notwithstanding your affections being engaged?"

"He has decided on no such thing," replied Lavinia.

"How? What am I to infer from your note then?"

"The fact is simply this," said Lavinia; "his affection for me is so great, that he cannot bring himself to part with me, and so I have been induced to plight my word to him that I never will change my name."

"Never change your name!" repeated Melville, recoiling through mingled indignation and alarm.

"Never!" said Lavinia, putting her handkerchief to her face, and turning aside her head.

"Good God! and do you call this affection?" exclaimed Melville. "No, it is selfishness—odious, revolting selfishness;

and if you have, indeed, unwarily been drawn in to make a promise, it was so unnatural, so unreasonable to desire, I will hope and believe that you cannot think of adhering to it."

"You may reproach me as you please," said Lavinia, "but a promise so solemnly given I cannot think of breaking; I will, however, so far promise to you, that if, on an introduction to my father, you can prevail on him, by your arguments and entreaties, to release me from it, I shall perhaps not prove myself unwilling to profit by the concession."

"When or how may I expect to be introduced to him?" demanded Melville; "I really cannot endure a much longer continuance of my present suspense: but should he prove inexorable, what—what then, my Lavinia," taking her hand, and fondly pressing it to his bosom, "is to be done? Am I then to be driven to despair?"

"I hope not; I am sure I do not know," said Lavinia.

“But do not you know whether you will adhere to your promise or not?”

“I have already said——But who is that? there is a gentleman approaching.”

“My uncle,” said Melville, in a tone of reviving confidence, as he flew to admit him, convinced, from his following him to the cottage, that sir William had succeeded in his arguments with him.—“How good! how kind!” he cried, as he ushered him into the parlour, “to allow sir William to succeed for me!”

“Sir William!” repeated sir James, a little indignantly; “and pray, sir, is it to sir William’s influence alone any indulgence I may be inclined to shew you is to be ascribed?”

“Oh no, sir! Though do not mistake me,” said Melville; “to your own generous heart ultimately I know; but the services of a friend are sometimes not amiss in the first instance.”

He then introduced him to Lavinia, who rose, evidently agitated at his entrance. Sir James went up to her, and saluted

her.—“A fair excuse indeed,” he said, “for disobedience; do not be offended, young lady, but I did form certain plans for this young gentleman, but which, from this moment, I shall cease to feel any further anxiety about.”

“You are very kind, very good, sir, I am sure, to speak in this manner,” said Lavinia; “since I heard of Mr. Melville’s uncle, it has been my wish to have the good fortune to please him if ever we met.”

“He must be a very strange being,” replied the old gentleman, gallantly, “who could look at you without being pleased with you.”

“Oh, what happiness would all this have given me a short time ago!” said Melville; “but now!—But would you, could you believe it possible, sir, that this cruel, this terrible father of my Lavinia —”

“I cannot, indeed, let you speak of my father in such terms, Mr. Melville,” interrupted Lavinia.

“ I can speak of him in no other,” said Melville.—“ Could you think—could you believe it possible, sir,” again addressing himself to his uncle, “ that he has had the unreasonableness, the inhumanity I will call it, to extort a promise from her never to change her name?”

“ Really! well certainly it appears rather an extraordinary circumstance, for most parents are solicitous for the happy establishment of their children in life; but what reason can he assign for it?”

“ Oh, none, none!” said Melville, speaking for Lavinia; “ he can assign none for it, that can in any way excuse or justify it—to the most unnatural selfishness it is owing.”

“ Well, I should rather hope some other motive might be adduced for it, for sir William Erin, of whose judgment I have a high opinion, does not altogether think unfavourably of him.”

“ And has he given you any reason to imagine, my dear sir,” demanded Melville,

“that he could be induced to alter any determination he had formed?”

“Why, on that head I will not flatter you,” said sir James.

“What is to be done then?” said Melville, in a tone of despair; “for I cannot ask or expect your interference, if persuaded it would be unavailing.”

Sir James sat musing for some minutes — “Why, really I don’t well know what to say,” he replied; “desperate cases have always been allowed to require desperate remedies; so really I know not what to advise, but that as the carriage in which you came is at the door, and the coast appears clear, you carry her off without further ceremony.”

“Ah, my dear sir, if I could believe you serious in this advice, and Miss Audley would consent, be assured I should not be backward in following it.”

“Well, I am serious, I assure you.”

“Excuse me, my dear uncle,” said Melville, a little resentfully, “but really this is not a time for jesting with me—you

know not what I am suffering at this very moment."

"I beg your pardon, I can easily conceive, if under an apprehension of losing this young lady; and, as a proof, have suggested a plan for relieving you from this apprehension."

"What! is it to attempt to carry her off in the broad face of day?"

"Why not? a favourable opportunity should never be lost, on any occasion. But if you have not courage for the attempt, suppose I make it for you?—what say you to my running away with her for you?"

"What am I to think of this?" said Melville, looking earnestly at him; "there is something in all this I do not comprehend—I see significant glances exchanged between you and Miss Audley—I see neither in any degree appearing to participate in the uneasiness under which I am suffering, though I am aware neither are indifferent about my feelings—what am I to think, to infer from this?"

"Hand this young lady into the car-

riage," said sir James; "and when we have got her safe there between us, your curiosity may perhaps be gratified."

With increasing surprise Melville turned his eyes on Lavinia. The smile with which she met them completed his perplexity.

"Well, after this, call yourself an impassioned lover!" said sir James; "with an opportunity for carrying off your mistress, and yet not avail yourself of it!—But come, ma'am," presenting his hand to Lavinia, "what he neglects to make use of, let me profit by."

He led her to the carriage, Melville, in utter amazement, followed, and they drove off. While proceeding to the Vale, we shall explain all that is necessary to be known.

Sir James Melville was a man of dissipated habits, though esteemed by his own sex a man of honour and integrity, and a ridiculer of marriage. When somewhat advanced in life, a beautiful cottage-girl struck his fancy, and all those arts that

had so often before proved successful, were again had recourse to, for the purpose of effecting her ruin ; but she was proof to all the temptations that fortune enabled him to throw in her way ; and at length, rather than give her up, he resolved on marrying her. So long as they considered his views dishonourable, her parents treated him with disdain, and watched over her with unremitting vigilance ; but no sooner did they understand the alteration they had undergone, than they became his zealous advocates ; but in vain for some time they exerted themselves for him ; she had conceived a dislike to him not to be surmounted, and nothing but force at length induced her to become his.

But though sir James had then too little command over himself to be able to give her up, he was perfectly aware of the ridicule which so disproportioned a marriage in every respect must occasion, after being so long a contemner of matrimony, and so often arrogantly descanting on the numerous qualifications that, if ever he did

change his state, could alone induce him to do so: and in order as much as possible to prevent what he dreaded, he resolved on not acknowledging his marriage, till his lady was in some degree fitted for the rank to which he had raised her.

To remove her from her connexions was a material step. He accordingly took her over to England, where a house was taken for her in the vicinity of the metropolis, under a feigned name, and masters of the first eminence in every branch of polite education engaged to attend her. Sir James still figured as a single man in the circles of fashion; and fond as he was of his beautiful wife, any thing like domestic life was still too little relished by him, not to occasion his absences, if not very long, to be at least very frequent, from her.

This conduct exposed her to dangers he little dreamed of. The pursuits in which he had her engaged he fancied would completely occupy her mind; but he forgot that from her early habits it was more

likely they would be regarded with distaste than pleasure; this was the case, and she often sought relief from what was tiresome and fatiguing, because bewildering, in stolen rambles about the village where she lived.

These rambles exposed her to the observation of a handsome young libertine of rank in the neighbourhood. How he contrived to introduce himself to her, or improve those opportunities which this introduction afforded him to her destruction, it matters not to say—suffice it, the sensibility which sir James had failed of exciting, he but too fatally awakened. The connexion was continued for months, without the slightest suspicion of it; at length, through some untoward circumstance, it was betrayed, and lady Melville, apprized of its disclosure to her husband, fled in terror and dismay to her seducer, for protection from his rage and reproaches, with no other regret, at the moment indeed, than what resulted from leaving her infant daughter behind her.

How bitterly did sir James now regret having ever been tempted to change his original determination against matrimony! however, it was some consolation that the folly he had committed still remained unknown. He finally decided on never acknowledging this disastrous union, and, of course, on bringing up his daughter in utter ignorance of her birth, to whom indeed he had conceived a sudden dislike, from a strong suspicion of her not being his.

Years passed away—the parents of lady Melville were dead, and there was no one to perplex or trouble sir James with inquiries either about her or her child. At length she, in her turn, became forsaken, and in the bitter agony of finding herself so, was at length awakened to a full conviction of her guilt. Grief and remorse brought on a rapid decline; and, convinced she had not long to live, she now determined on making that exertion for her child she had hitherto forborne through shame and fear. She had heard of sir

James's determination ; and aware of what it was owing to, could not think of going out of the world without endeavouring to have justice done her. She accordingly summoned resolution to write to sir James on the subject, but in vain letter after letter was addressed to him—they were all returned unopened. She at length confided her story to the clergyman who was in constant attendance on her, and obtaining his interference, sir James was at last induced to consent to one interview—the result was, every suspicion prejudicial to the interests of his daughter being removed from his mind. The dying state in which he found the wretched penitent would not permit him to doubt her solemn asseverations ; but his determination of still concealing his marriage remained unaltered, nor did he feel the slightest wish or inclination to do more for his daughter than he had at first intended.

Lady Melville died shortly after this interview. Some months after her decease, happening to be in that part of the coun-

try to which Lavinia had been sent, but without its being known to whom she belonged, a sudden impulse, which he called curiosity, induced him to call and see her. She was then between three and four years old, a little angel in beauty, and so playful, so caressing, it was impossible to see her without being interested and delighted with her. In short, from that moment nature began to assert herself in his heart, and he felt regret at what he had done, for after so long concealing his marriage, there was an awkwardness in avowing it, now he could not get over; besides, in the first impulse of the resentment that had decided him on discarding or disowning his daughter, he had adopted his nephew, and after allowing the boy to consider himself as his heir, he knew not how to disappoint the expectations he had raised. Yet how could he bear to have his own sweet girl deprived of her just inheritance? At length a way occurred of reconciling all matters—this was by uniting the two cousins. The project was no sooner con-

ceived than it occasioned a complete change with regard to his original plan about Lavinia. He still decided on having her brought up in utter ignorance of her birth, but no longer in the obscurity he had at first intended. For the rank in which he now destined her, it was requisite she should receive a suitable education; and all that remained for further consideration was, to whose care he should intrust her. This he was not long in deciding on—Mr. Wheatley, his agent in Ireland, soon occurred to his thoughts, as a person to whom he might safely do so, not merely from the opinion he entertained of his principles, but from some certain circumstances that had so far put him in his power, as to render it an object to him to prove faithful to any trust he might repose in him. To him accordingly the secret of his marriage was disclosed, and all his plans and intentions with regard to Lavinia and her cousin. Mr. Wheatley was grateful for his confidence, and received the charge committed to him with all the

requisite assurances of secrecy and vigilance. A house was taken for him and his family at Bath, where sir James chose she should be educated, that she might have a home on the spot, and Lavinia was placed at one of the first seminaries there.

In due time master Sedley received a hint of the necessity of guarding himself from any entanglement, by being informed by his uncle of his having already projected an alliance for him; and as she grew up, Mr. Wheatley was instructed to give Miss Lavinia a hint to the same effect, lest any attempt should be made to engage her affections. That any one would, however, have an opportunity for making the attempt, he deemed very unlikely, it being his strict command that she should never be taken into public, nor allowed to visit any where, except under the immediate care and control of Mr. Wheatley. One of his reasons indeed for not yet acknowledging her, was a fear that it might occasion the frustration of

his plan, for, as his heiress, he was well aware of the competitors there would be for her favour; and so great was his affection for Melville, that he could not bear to think of his being disappointed of the fortune he had allowed him to look forward to, or indeed of the fortune and title being disunited. A fear of exciting a suspicion in the mind of Mrs. Wheatley of the truth, on whose discretion he could not bring himself to place the same reliance he did on her husband's, made him resist the longing inclination he felt from time to time to visit Bath, for the purpose of seeing his darling girl, for whom he gradually conceived the most doting fondness, insomuch as to be even more anxious for the gratification of her whims than she was herself.

The pains he took to prevent any disappointment to his plan, through Melville's means, are already known; on one pretext or other, he was continually contriving to drag him about from place to place, trusting, by keeping him in this

unsettled state, he should prevent the danger of his forming any attachment inimical to his views.

The time was approaching for an explanation, when Melville begged to be permitted to devote some time to his friend; and it instantly struck sir James, that this would be a good opportunity for ascertaining what effect this explanation was likely to produce, by availing himself of it, to introduce Lavinia to him.

Whatever was requisite for the purpose was immediately done—a residence procured for Mr. Wheatley—and a letter written to sir William Erin, one of his oldest friends, and in his complete confidence, apprizing him of what he wished, and entreating him to obtain the notice and protection of lady and Miss Erin for his dear girl.

The result is already known; but no language could do justice to what was experienced by sir James, when led to believe she had completely thrown herself away. The shock given to his feelings by

the news of her elopement, brought on a spasmodic attack, that had nearly proved fatal. Under the persuasion that he was dying, Sedley was summoned. Before his arrival, however, he was pronounced out of danger; and he then hesitated, from shame and regret, to make the disclosure he had at first intended; thus, as it proved, by delaying it, prolonging his own misery, and the anxiety and uneasiness of those for whom he was most interested. Sometimes he blamed himself alone for what had happened, sometimes Mr. Wheatley; now conceiving that if he had at once acknowledged Lavinia, the pride of birth would have prevented her so disgracing herself; then again, that if Mr. Wheatley had been properly vigilant, she never could have had an opportunity for acting as she did. That such would be his idea, Mr. Wheatley had little doubt, and the conviction was no small aggravation of his unhappiness at what had occurred.

Mr. Wheatley was the son of an eminent merchant; he was on the point of

marriage with the eldest daughter of sir Philip Raymond, when the sudden failure of his father occasioned an interdiction to be put to his marriage by the haughty and avaricious baronet—an interdiction, however, that the young people were either too thoughtless, or too much attached, or perhaps both, to regard, and the consequence was a stolen marriage, under the full persuasion, that though their union would not be permitted, yet, when once it had taken place, it would be pardoned.

In yielding to such a one, however, they did not thoroughly know sir Philip; in the first transports of his rage, at finding his daughter had deceived, or rather disobeyed him, he took a solemn vow never to forgive her, or be induced by any means to do any thing either for her or any family she might have; and with his own father unable to assist him, Mr. Wheatley, through his implacability, would probably have been reduced to the greatest distress, but that sir James Melville, with whom he had formed an intimacy in his more

prosperous days, stepped forward to serve him, with an offer of his agency.

For what had rescued him from the extremity of actual distress, Mr. Wheatley could not but be grateful; but he had been brought up with pride and ambition, and to remain satisfied with a situation that placed him in a subordinate rank to a man he had long considered himself on an equality with, was not to be thought of. Amongst those he flattered himself still interested about him, was a gentleman high in office; he addressed an application to him, and received, in reply, an assurance that he might rely on his best exertions for obtaining him a situation worthy of him.

Encouraged by this assurance, Mr. Wheatley suffered himself to be drawn into expences far exceeding his income, and by no means becoming his then level rank in life; but he could not resist his wish to disappoint the malice of sir Philip, by letting him see he still had the power, in spite of him, of living in a manner con-

sonant to his inclination, trusting, that before he should be called upon by sir James for any particular settlement of accounts, he should be able to restore whatever beyond his own immediate salary he had made use of; but in this hope he was disappointed; after being kept on, day after day, in lingering expectation of its fulfilment, till patience at length became utterly exhausted, and wrought up to frenzy at the idea of the detection that must ensue, the ingratitude and baseness he should stand convicted of, he resolved on the crime of self-destruction, to avoid the shame and reproaches he conceived he so justly merited. How this terrible resolve came to be discovered in time, it matters not to say—his wretched wife got a friend to watch over him, and addressed a letter to sir James, then in England, explanatory of all that had occurred.

Though highly and justly incensed at finding such a return had been made for his friendship, still sir James could not resist the feelings that urged him to say

something consolatory to this miserable pair; accordingly he replied to Mrs. Wheatley in soothing terms, desiring her husband might be informed it was his wish he should still continue to act for him, till he heard further from him.

It was just at this juncture that his plans and intentions with regard to his daughter had undergone a change, in consequence of the project of uniting her to her cousin being conceived; and still entertaining a high opinion of poor Wheatley's principles, notwithstanding what had happened, the expectations he had been allowed to entertain in some degree excusing this, he decided, as already seen, on giving her up to his care, naturally believing his anxiety to reestablish himself in his confidence would lead to all that vigilance about her he required. How matters were managed, so as to prevent Mrs. Wheatley from having a suspicion of the truth, it would be tedious as well as unnecessary to detail.

At parting, sir James informed Wheat-

ley, that should he discharge the trust reposed in him in the manner he wished and expected, the income he had then settled on him, should be secured as a perpetuity to him and his family; but if, on the contrary——But it was unnecessary to finish the sentence.

The intimation was not lost on the person it was addressed to, and continued to haunt his tortured imagination, from the moment of Lavinia's elopement, as the day was now gone by for looking elsewhere for friendship or patronage. His father-in-law was by this time dead, and had descended to the grave without ever giving Mrs. Wheatley any reason to imagine he had relented towards her, a circumstance that would have occasioned her no little affliction, but for the involuntary resentment that was excited by the unjust distinction he had made between her and her sister, whom, for a similar offence, he had pardoned, merely because his pride was more gratified by the connexion she had formed than by his other

daughter's, thus proving that it was not the crime of disobedience he punished, but the disappointment it occasioned.

The brother of the late lord Altidore, a young man of very dissipated habits and inconsiderable fortune for his rank in life, proposed for the youngest Miss Raymond, and was rejected by sir Philip. This, however, had not the effect of inducing the young lady to give up her lover; they were married in private, but with a determination to keep the circumstance a secret, till either a favourable opportunity should occur for acknowledging it to her father, or the bridegroom's affairs should be sufficiently retrieved to allow of his forming an establishment suitable to their rank, without his assistance. She was not only a wife, but a mother, some time previous to her sister's marriage, but still continued to conceal her own, and might have done so much longer, but for the unexpected death of her brother-in-law, which, putting her husband in possession of the family title and estate, rendered her re-

gardless any longer of the consequences that might result from avowing it; but as she had anticipated, from her knowledge of her father's disposition, there was no longer any reason to apprehend any thing unpleasant from this. The result proved she was correct in this surmise; the pride of sir Philip was too highly gratified by the rank to which her disobedience had been the means of elevating her, to be able to evince any displeasure at that disobedience; and finally, on her death and lord Altidore's, which happened within a very short period of each other, he took her two children under his care, with an avowed determination of leaving them the whole of his property.

Mrs. Wheatley could not but think this a most unjust determination, since her offence had certainly not been a more heinous one than her sister's; but it was attended with mortifying circumstances to sir Philip, that would not permit him to forgive it, or even the children of her sis-

ter to know they had such a relation.

What she was, Mrs. Wheatley could not entirely forget, and ardently, in consequence, wished her daughter to participate in the advantages bestowed on Lavinia; but this Mr. Wheatley would by no means permit—as their expectations were widely different, so he conceived should their education. An expensive and fashionable seminary was not a place adapted for keeping her ideas from soaring; and the evils accruing from their being too elevated for our station, his own experience rendered him fully aware of; in short, suffering had rendered him wise. From the moment of his extrication from the situation in which aiming beyond his means had placed him, he determined on avoiding all society for the future, calculated to lead him again into a similar error, and not only to keep his daughter from it, but to positively restrict her from knowing to whom she was connected, lest it should be a means of inspiring her with

vain or conceited notions. But though he could not be induced to gratify her mother's ambitious wish, he was too refined and well educated himself, not to bestow on her a polite as well as useful education; and in every respect she grew up all he could desire, amiable in her disposition, sufficiently accomplished to be a most pleasing companion, and vying in beauty with her dear Lavinia, whom she always regarded in the light of a sister. That, notwithstanding all his precautions, however, she had obtained some knowledge of lord Altidore, must be obvious from what has occurred. We shall give her story, however, in her own words.

In a walk one day to Rosehill, attended merely by a servant, Miss Erin encountered lord Altidore, and was accompanied by him the remainder of the way. All the family were out but Rosetta. On being introduced into the parlour where she was sitting, she was coming forward to receive Miss Erin, when a glimpse of lord

Altidore behind her arrested her steps; and, faintly uttering his name, she tottered back, and sunk, nearly lifeless, on a seat.

Both hastened to her assistance. It was some time before she revived. As soon as lord Altidore saw her recovering, he bowed, with a look of great embarrassment, to Miss Erin, and precipitately withdrew, evidently much agitated.

Rosetta's eyes sought him the moment she recovered. On finding him gone, she attempted to address Eveleen; but for some minutes tears impeded her utterance; then a little collecting herself, after apologizing for the trouble she had occasioned her—"You must doubtless, my dear ma'am," she said, "be surprised at what you have witnessed; but if you will grant me your attention for a little while, I hope I shall be able to explain it, in a way that will prevent its being any injury to lord Altidore; for that his unexpected sight was the cause of my being so overcome, I am aware it would be use-

less to deny. I should grieve to be the means of doing him a prejudice in the mind of any one, but more especially in a person's about whom I know he feels so deep an interest," and again, spite of her evident efforts to suppress them, tears gushed from her.

"I will not deny," said Miss Erin, "that my curiosity is excited; "neither that, had I ever made up my mind, which, however, I never did, to give any positive encouragement to the attentions of lord Altidore, the recent scene would certainly have prevented me till explained. Be it explained, however, as it may, I am pretty well convinced my sentiments will remain just the same they are at present for him, and almost equally inclined to believe that he has for some time ceased to desire any alteration in them, from seeing there was but very little chance of its being effected. I do justice to his merits; but our affections are not at our command; and I have too good an opinion of the good sense of lord Altidore, and think, besides, he pos-

sesses too much pride, to suppose he would allow himself to be devoted to a person who never gave him much reason to suppose she could make a suitable return for his regard."

Rosetta shook her head, as if incredulous of this. Yet certainly what Miss Erin said had the effect that was intended, that of soothing her, and if ever she had any hope about lord Altidore, of reviving it. After a little hesitation, she asked Miss Erin if she had any disinclination to accompany her to the garden, where they would be more out of the way of being interrupted than where they then were.

Miss Erin replied in the negative, and to the arbour they accordingly proceeded.

Rosetta prefaced her story with an account of her parents, their early expectations in life, and the circumstances to which were owing the disappointment of those expectations.—“ But with all which I remained unacquainted, till I was grown up,” she continued, “ my father, from the wisest reasons, choosing I should remain

in ignorance of my having any connexions more exalted than myself. His constant aim was to guard me from pride and vanity, and various restrictions were the consequence, but which I was then too happy to murmur at.

“ Our house was delightfully situated in the vicinity of Bath, so as to allow us at once to have the enjoyments of the country, with a little of the bustle and gaiety of a large town; and one way or other, I always had so much to occupy my time, and agreeably diversify it at home, as never to breathe a sigh after amusement elsewhere. But certainly, the truly happy time was when the vacations permitted Miss Audley to be at home, as, exclusive of the delight derived from having her immediately with me, there was always then, if the season or weather allowed it, some pleasant excursion or other planning for her amusement.

“ But very few, I believe, are permitted to advance far in life, without meeting with something to cross or perplex them.

I was about seventeen, when an old friend of my mother came to Bath; they met by accident, and this meeting occasioned the renewal of all their former intimacy. My father rather regretted the circumstance, from a fear of her betraying what he had taken such pains to have concealed from me. He gave her a hint on the subject; how she attended to it, I shall shortly shew.

“ Mrs. Brabazon was one of those restless characters that must be employed; having but few resources in her own mind, and very little to occupy her about her own affairs, she was always busying herself about those of others, certainly, however, not without a good-natured wish to be of service. She was quite enraged on learning that my grandfather was not yet reconciled to my mother, and suggested a thousand plans in consequence, not one of which, however, were acceded to, from a conviction that they could answer no other purpose, than that of reviving feelings that were by this time subdued. To conceive

a project, however, and relinquish it, was not in the nature of Mrs. Brabazon. One way or other, she determined on endeavouring to bring about a reconciliation between my grandfather and mother, and since not allowed to do so openly, resolved on doing so privately; not altogether displeased, perhaps, at the ill success of her first suggestions, since it afforded her an opportunity for busying herself still more than she perhaps could otherwise have done; and besides, the greater the difficulty in accomplishing what she undertook, the greater would finally be her merit. To effect what she was so solicitous for, however, it was requisite she should have an interview with my grandfather, and accordingly she proceeded to Cheltenham, where he then was, but of which my parents were ignorant, years having elapsed since they had known any thing about his movements. By this time far advanced in life, feelings of compunction had begun to be awakened in the mind of sir Philip,

for his conduct to his eldest daughter, but which the consideration of the solemn manner in which he had bound himself never to notice her again, prevented her deriving any benefit from. They certainly had the effect, however, of rendering him more accessible than he would otherwise have been to the arguments and representations of Mrs. Brabazon, who, being a blunt speaker, and long acquainted with him, was not backward in saying what she thought of his conduct.

“ The result was, his agreeing to let me be introduced to him, provided our affinity was, for the present, concealed from me, and my parents knew nothing of the circumstance, under the idea that my cousin, lord Altidore, who was then with him, might perhaps take a fancy to me, and thus afford him, by sanctioning our union, an opportunity of indirectly making amends to my mother for the injustice he was now sensible he had been guilty of to her.

“ Mrs. Brabazon undertook to manage

every thing; the more difficult and intricate any thing was, indeed, the more she delighted in it. The moment she returned from her secret visit to Cheltenham, she announced her intention of passing some time there, and gave me the invitation that had been planned between her and my grandfather to accompany her there.

“ My father hesitated about permitting me; but his objections were at length overruled by my mother, who could not help thinking he restricted me too much, and wishing to see me introduced a little into life; and the wished-for consent was accordingly at length obtained.

“ Hardly was I seated beside Mrs. Brabazon in the carriage that was to convey us thither, than she set about relating all I have related to you, conceiving it requisite I should be acquainted with these particulars, for the better regulation of my conduct. What my surprise, my emotions were at her disclosure, may easily be imagined. When I had a little recovered

from its effects upon me, however, I could not help wishing she had not made it, feeling almost convinced it would operate as an unpleasant restraint upon my feelings. What she had said, however, could not be unsaid ; and in a state of extreme agitation, I found myself set down, at the termination of our journey, at my grandfather's residence, where it had been settled we were to take up our abode.

“ In consequence of the state in which she saw me at the moment, Mrs. Brabazon began to regret her communication to me, or, at least, to wish she had delayed it till after my introduction to sir Philip. Fortunately for his confidence in her, however, his own at the instant was too great to permit him to notice mine ; and all passed off without any suspicion at his side of my knowing more than he wished.

“ I have already mentioned that lord Altidore was then with him ; his sister also, the wife of general Southwell, had lately arrived at Cheltenham, to remain with her grandfather till the return of the

general from abroad with his regiment, and whom I soon understood she had married, more for the sake of becoming her own mistress, than from any attachment to him, there being a very great disparity in their ages.

“ It is requisite I should be explicit with you, my dear madam; I will therefore confess, that I had not long known lord Altidore, ere I felt a wish that the idea or hope under which I had been invited to Cheltenham might not be disappointed. I soon began to imagine he did not view me with absolute indifference; nor, as I afterwards ascertained, was I mistaken in the surmise; but ignorance of my real pretensions, united to a wish to sound the sentiments of sir Philip on the subject, ere he unresistingly gave way to an attachment for me, often occasioned a restriction and interruption in those attentions that at length induced a belief, on my side, that he was apprized of the plan which Mrs. Brabazon had disclosed to me, and that these variations I

perceived in his manner were owing to a struggle between pride and inclination about acquiescing in it.

“ In vain Mrs. Brabazon assured me to the contrary. Those capable of violating confidence in one instance, we are apt to believe capable of violating it in another ; and that she had done so, she had herself confessed to me. In vain she assured me, that if I would only be guided by her, only allow it to be seen I did not prefer any other person to lord Altidore, every thing would turn out as I could wish, as my grandfather only wanted to be assured that the scheme of our union would not be displeasing to either, to speak explicitly to him on the subject. I would neither give credit to her assertions, nor pay attention to her advice. My pride took the alarm, from believing there was a struggle in lord Altidore’s mind about me ; and, in consequence, I decided on acting in such a manner as should either deceive him with regard to my feelings, or so alarm his own, as to force him to put me out of

suspense about them. Opportunities for coquetting are never wanting in such places as I was then at. I had hitherto been shy and bashful in my manner, both from natural diffidence, and the timidity in general attendant on a first introduction into life; but I now forced myself to act contrary to my real feelings, and give just a sufficient degree of laughing encouragement to the gay triflers of the place, to draw a host of them about me. Amongst them was lord S——, a young nobleman, as, I dare say, you know, of high celebrity in the fashionable world. He only seemed to require a little encouragement to distinguish me by his attentions; every day they became still more particular; and Mrs. Brabazon at last began to remonstrate with me on the subject, pointing out the consequences that could hardly fail of accruing from appearing to encourage him. But I derided her remonstrances. I was literally wise in my own conceit, and determined on persevering in what I conceived would

either be the means of having my own feelings spared, or compelling the speedy disclosure of lord Altidore's. I blush when I review this part of my conduct; it was a departure from the ingenuousness and simplicity in which I had been brought up; but I have been severely, though only properly punished for it. While I imagined I was rendering lord S—— subservient to my designs, he, in reality, was rendering me subservient to his.

“ I know I may place the greatest reliance on your honour, else I could not bring myself to proceed in what must so terribly criminate another. Lord S—— was an encouraged admirer of Mrs. Southwell; it was entirely on her account he had come to Cheltenham; but, doubly watched and guarded as she was, the general having expressly commanded her remaining under the protection of her grandfather and brother, until his return from abroad, they knew they could not be too cautious in the manner in which they carried on their correspondence. The idea of ma-

king me a pretext for being continually at the house, or hovering about it, quickly suggested itself to them ; but the little encouragement I at first gave to his particularities, made them for some time despair of succeeding in their plan ; but at length they had the gratification of seeing me unconsciously forwarding their design.

“ The encouragement I by degrees suffered myself to give lord S——, had the effect of rendering his visits to the house at last placed to my account; and thus suspicion averted from the right person, they allowed themselves a greater latitude than perhaps might otherwise have been the case. The chief scene of their stolen interviews was a summer-house in the garden, in consequence of knowing it was a place I much frequented, and that, if lord S—— should therefore be discovered there, or visiting it at improper hours, the circumstance would naturally be imputed to me.

“ This at length was the case. His visits to it were discovered by some of the

domestics, and betrayed to lord Altidore. After a struggle, as he confessed to me, between pride and resentment, he reproached me on the subject. I warmly repelled the justice of the accusation; and the happiest result might have been the consequence of this half disclosure of his sentiments for me, but for an unexpected interruption to our conversation.

“ Musing on the prospect of happiness, that I now began to fancy was opening to my view, I was sauntering in the evening in the shrubbery, at the end of the garden, when I suddenly beheld lord S—— stealing through the trees. As anxious now to avoid and shun him, as I had ever before been to meet or encourage him, since I had no doubt the confirmation of the suspicion now excited about him would be the means of subverting every hope I now cherished, I instinctively shrunk within the summer-house, to which I was close at the moment, and bolted myself in, but without being aware of there being another entrance to it; but

hardly had I secured myself within it, when I was rendered conscious of this, by hearing the voice of lord S——, addressing himself, in the most passionate terms, to Mrs. Southwell, who was already waiting for him in the outer apartment.

“ Their conversation quickly unfolded to me all I have disclosed to you ; and at once alarmed and indignant by the discovery I made, I determined immediately to betake me from Cheltenham, as the only means of extricating myself from the terrible predicament in which I saw my folly had placed me ; but I was destined to meet with the full punishment my imprudence merited. Lord Altidore, missing me in the drawing-room, had followed, to seek me in the garden, for the purpose of renewing the conversation that was broken off in the morning. He caught sight of me just at the moment that I was taking refuge in the summer-house, and which, almost at the same moment, he beheld lord S—— entering from a different path. To doubt, after this, what I had so solemnly

denied in the morning, he justly conceived would be ridiculous indeed ; and irritated at the imposition I had, as it appeared, endeavoured to practise on him, returned to the house, with a determination of quitting the place immediately, in order to avoid any further intercourse with me. At first he decided on silence on the subject ; but a feeling of generous anxiety for my welfare induced him to give up this intention, and speak to Mrs. Brabazon on the subject of lord S——, believing, from the well known character of his lordship, the interference of a friend absolutely essential for me. Mrs. Brabazon was all consternation at what she heard ; and, under the hope of there being some mistake in it, tried to dissuade him from leaving Cheltenham so directly, but in vain ; and ere I returned to the house, he was gone. What I felt on learning his departure, or rather, the cause of it, may easier be conceived than described. Yet, had I not the power of vindicating myself?—But no, for how could I attempt

what might be the means of endangering his life, or else of subjecting me to the odious imputation of being capable of basely slandering another? and that Mrs. Southwell would do every thing, for her own sake, for the purpose of inducing the belief of this, was hardly to be doubted.

“ To be brief, I resolved on submitting to what I had incurred through my own conduct, rather than, by making an effort to clear myself from it, involve myself perhaps in still greater unhappiness than I already experienced; but with what anguish, what difficulty, convinced as I was, that, by appearing to acknowledge the justness of the suspicion, I was depriving myself of the esteem I so highly valued! The reproaches of Mrs. Brabazon were not wanting to add to my misery, so much did she resent the disappointment of what she had taken such pains to plan; and, restored to my parents, she protested she would trouble herself no more about me. As impatient now to get rid of me, since there was an end of any further projects

for me, as she had before been to obtain me for her companion, the next day was fixed for our departure from Cheltenham, without any opposition from my grandfather, who, under the persuasion that I had either ill-treated his favourite, or else failed of inspiring him with any interest, soon lost the little he himself had experienced for me.

“ Mrs. Brabazon kept her word; from the time of my return to Bath, I never heard from her; nor, except by chance, of lord Altidore, till our coming to this neighbourhood, when——”

Here she paused, blushed deeply, and appeared extremely agitated.—“ I guess what you would say,” cried Miss Erin—“ you heard of his particularity to me; but you heard, I am convinced, more than ever was the case, of an attachment between us, which, in reality, never had existence, but in the imaginations of those who reported it; and I now joy to think lord Altidore is free as ever to renew his

vows to her who has the best right to have them plighted to her."

"Ah, my dear ma'am!" sighed Rosetta, "such a thing is not to be imagined! his being still at liberty to tender his addresses where he pleases, can be of little consequence to me, since, with such an impression on his mind against me, it is not to be supposed I could ever occupy another thought."

"Certainly, if that impression was allowed to remain," replied Miss Erin; "but that must not be; some method must be devised for preventing your happiness being completely sacrificed to your generosity."

"Ah! impossible!" said Rosetta; "I see no method by which I could attempt the vindication so essential to me, but at a hazard I tremble to think of."

"We must hope the reverse," replied Miss Erin. "If Mrs. Southwell possesses the slightest generosity, she will not refuse to do you that justice you have a right to demand from her."

“ She should not,” said Rosetta; “ yet that she will criminate herself for my sake, I can hardly flatter myself. No, no, my dear madam, I know your kind motive for trying to inspirit me with hope; but what is likely to prove delusive, I will not voluntarily yield to, convinced, as I am, that I should be unable to bear the renewal of the agitation it must excite. When we have made up our mind to any certain loss or deprivation, we at least experience composure, and that I will not risk by again giving way to expectation. But I have trespassed too long upon your attention; I have nothing further to add, than, from the time of my return to Bath, a deep and consuming melancholy has preyed upon my health and peace; but not so entirely from any disappointment I experienced, as the conviction of the light in which I should be regarded by my parents, if aware of the manner in which I acted; tormented by this, their tenderness—their fond caresses, have often failed of soothing my feelings; for to be able to

derive real comfort and happiness from the affection of our friends, it is requisite we should feel conscious of truly meriting it."

Eveleen could not dissent from the truth of this observation; if praise undeserved is censure in disguise, she was well aware the fond caresses of confiding friends must be a source of torture to the secretly upbraiding heart; she, however, said every thing she could to sooth the fair afflicted, nor left her till she was a little restored to composure.

As she was slowly retracing her way back, musing upon what she had been listening to, and the extreme difficulty, she feared, would attend any attempt for the vindication of Rosetta, she was abruptly joined by lord Altidore again. He looked all agitation; and Eveleen, not well knowing what he might like to acknowledge, felt utterly at a loss how to address him; but from the embarrassment she experienced he soon relieved her.—“ I see I

startled you," he said, "by the abruptness with which I joined you, but the agitation of my mind must be my excuse for this. You will not wonder at the emotions I experience when I inform you, that I have overheard the whole of what you have been listening to. The anxiety I was in about the fair being whom you have honoured with your notice, would not permit me to retreat from the cottage till I had seen you again. While waiting for you in its vicinity, you entered the arbour with her, behind which I was sheltered, and without actually intending to listen, I was involuntarily rivetted to the spot. What my feelings were at the recital I thus overheard, may easier be conceived than described. To learn a relationship I had before no idea of, naturally filled me with surprise; and if the perfect vindication of a being that had been so interesting to me occasioned delight, yet how was that empoisoned by the reflection of its being effected at the expence of so near and dear a relative as a sister! true, on the feeling

and generosity of Miss Erin I knew I might rely for secrecy on the terrible subject; but how galling—how afflicting to think, there should be any thing in the conduct of one so nearly connected to me, to render the exertion of these requisite! But I see I pain, I embarrass you,” said lord Altidore; “let me, therefore, only briefly add, that had I obeyed the impulse of my feelings, I should, at once, have discovered myself; but what had previously occurred in the cottage rendered me fearful of yielding to them. I hasten home, however, to explain myself to my fair and newly-discovered relative, and trust the ample justice I now do her in my own mind, will be considered a sufficient atonement and reparation for the wrong before done her.”

Here was an unexpected termination, indeed, to the difficulties which Eveleen had before anticipated, in the way of Rosetta's happiness! But Rosetta could not be brought so immediately to acquiesce in the wishes of her lover as was expected;

she was aware of the confidence it was natural for him to repose in the word of his sister, and that, should she therefore choose to deny what she had been accused of, the renewal of jealousy and distrust might be the consequence; and therefore finally decided, after some struggle with her feelings, on positively resisting the renewal of his addresses, except assured there could be no danger of what she apprehended. The consequence of this decision was the delay of the introduction of lord Altidore to her parents, and that appearance of particularity between his lordship and Eveleen, from her being the confidant of both parties, that more than once excited uneasiness in the mind of Donaghue.

Mrs. Southwell did not, by this time, require the admonitory letters of her brother, to awaken her to a full sense of the injury she had done Rosetta; but still she knew not how to bring herself to acknowledge what must so essentially injure her in his estimation. The serious considera-

tions effected by declining health, brought on by the appearance of culpability into which she had been drawn through the artifices of lord S——, who, finding he could not completely triumph over her principles, at length deserted her for another, finally effected what was wished, and the happiest result was the consequence.

Lord Altidore had, indeed, been seriously attached to Rosetta; so much so, that it was more through pique and resentment, than any real transfer of regard, he had been induced to think of another. Fully acquitted in his opinion, she no longer delayed making known to her parents what has already been detailed, and it may well be believed, they had no hesitation in receiving lord Altidore as a relative, or sanctioning her union with him. Preparations for this immediately commenced, though, out of respect to the feelings of sir James Melville, of a private nature, so that sir William actually had not deceived Donaghue,

when he informed him that lord Altidore was on the very eve of changing his condition.

Those who have never experienced disquietude cannot properly be said to know what real happiness is, so much does contrast heighten every felicitous feeling. This was not wanting to add to the enjoyment of the party now assembled at the Vale, and perhaps a more truly happy one could hardly have been met with.

Lady Jane, who, through her emissaries, kept up a kind of telegraphic communication with the neighbourhood, soon received intelligence of all that had occurred at the Vale. How lord Rosenellis had been able to vindicate himself of the charge she had brought against him, she could not conceive, but she had a strong suspicion it was not without a detection to her prejudice, and, in consequence, decided on no more returning to the Vale, feeling it utterly impossible, with all her confidence, to be able to face any of the parties she had so attempted to injure im-

mediately again; not that she apprehended positive reproaches from them, but the idea of silent scorn was more insupportable than that of absolute invective; and she accordingly hastened to Dublin, for the purpose of returning to London. Hence, however, not to be entirely foiled in every scheme, she dispatched a letter to sir Edward, reminding him of the wish he had expressed to be allowed to accompany her to England, whenever she thought of returning to it.

But this letter met with a very different reception from what she had hoped or expected; the spell she had cast round the flattered baronet was dissolved the moment she had taken her departure, and with delight he returned to the enjoyment of poor little Miss Bond's conversation—an enjoyment he had not ceased regretting his relinquishment of, even at the very moment he was most gratified by the proud distinction to which he conceived the notice of lady Jane had elevated him, so perfectly was the conversation of this

young lady adapted to the meridian of his understanding, and so inexhaustible was the amusement he derived from her description of all the wonders she had seen *when in Paris*. Not immediately, however, could he obtain her forgiveness for the sudden cessation of his attentions to her; perseverance, at length, subdued her resentment, and the result of their renewed intercourse was a proposal that devoted him to her for the remainder of his life.

The party at the Vale were delighted to hear of the departure of her ladyship, since, after what had occurred, nothing could well have been more distressing than for those who could not, without pain, feign what they did not feel, to have been obliged to receive her again. Generously pardoning all the uneasiness she had caused them, their wish was more for her amendment than punishment; but a wish which, when they afterwards encountered her in London, they had very little reason to believe, either from what they heard or then

saw, there was any chance of yet awhile being realized.

Very little further remains to be added: a reconciliation was no sooner effected at the Vale, than Donaghue waited on his uncle, and, from the explanation that ensued, had the pleasure of being accompanied by him from sir Ulick Magennis's, where he had taken up his abode, to Altoir-na-Grenie. It was to the obliging information, indeed, of sir Ulick, that Donaghue was indebted for the letter he had received from the general; and, had the artifices of her ladyship prevailed, there would have been new claims upon his regard, that must have superseded those of his nephew.

The preparations that were so abruptly interrupted for the marriage of Donaghue and Eveleen were quickly renewed; and the fondest wish of lady Erin's heart was at length accomplished, in witnessing the union of her daughter with the son of her earliest and dearest friend. The marriage of Melville took place about the same

time, and lord Altidore's quickly followed.

From what has already been mentioned of the respective parties, we conceive, any of their respective plans or arrangements would be superfluous; suffice it, therefore, that what they censured in others, they resisted being allured into themselves; and though occasionally obliged and induced to absent themselves from their respective homes, still made it a point to have it understood, that *the land of their forefathers was their permanent residence*. The result was all that was gratifying to their feelings; from it they clearly saw, that were their example followed, many of the evils now complained of there would be avoided; for—

“ Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey,”
when basely deserted by its own children.

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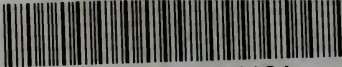
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